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Internal Factors Affecting Brand Performance

is submitted for the award of Doctor of Philosophy degree

School of Management
The Open University

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INTERNAL FACTORS AFFECTING BRAND PERFORMANCE

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DECLARATION

This research was embedded within a larger research project, 'Modelling the Resources Constituting Brands: A Team-Based Perspective', originally led by Prof. Leslie de Chernatony and funded by HFC Bank (formerly Beneficial Bank). Prof. de Chernatony was also the original supervisor for the research.

The conceptual model described in the research was derived independently by the author of this thesis but designed to build upon and extend de Chernatony's (1994) core hypotheses, as is explained in Chapter 3. The exact specification of the conceptual model was refined during the course of the research. However, the original version of the conceptual model has been reported in two published papers (Harris and de Chernatony, 1999; Harris and de Chernatony, 2001).

The research design and questionnaires were designed by the author, but modified and agreed in collaboration with Prof. de Chernatony as they needed to meet the needs of the larger research project as well as the doctoral research. All of the published scales used or adapted for use in the questionnaires were identified by the author. However, Prof. de Chernatony made a major contribution to the operationalisation of those brand identity components examined using open-ended questions. The content analysis of these questions was also agreed with Prof. de Chernatony, following initial analysis by the author, to derive the statements from the brand team's responses.

All of the organisations that participated in the research were recruited by the author, who was also responsible for liasing with the contacts in these organisations throughout the course of the research.

With the exception of the content analysis of the open-ended questions, for which Prof. de Chernatony conducted secondary concurrence analysis, all of the data were analysed solely by the author. The interpretation of the results and reporting of the thesis are also entirely the author's own work.

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ABSTRACT

In terms of effective branding, several recent trends have indicated the need for greater attention within the organisation than has traditionally been the case. With increased emphasis on corporate branding, the team responsible for managing a brand is becoming larger and more diverse and *all* staff, as the corporate brand's representatives, affect consumers' perceptions of the corporate brand. Furthermore, the shift in emphasis in the literature from the externally perceived brand image to the internally created brand identity entails actively creating how an organisation wishes to be perceived. To project a consistent corporate brand successfully to consumers, all staff need to have congruent perceptions about the brand's identity.

The aim of this research was to identify internal factors influencing brand team members' and consumer-facing staff's perceptions of their brand's identity and the impact of these factors and perceptions on consumers' perceptions and brand performance. A conceptual model was developed and associated hypotheses formulated. Studies were conducted using postal questionnaires with three stakeholder groups in the financial services sector: (i) brand team members, (ii) consumer-facing staff and (iii) consumers.

Although failing to identify correctly all of the intervening variables, support was found for sections of the conceptual model. The research confirmed that larger corporate brand teams increased the diversity of members' functional backgrounds. While brand teams composed of members with diverse functional backgrounds potentially have a wider range of knowledge and information available to them, diversity in brand team members' characteristics was found to impair the congruency of their brand perceptions. The importance of congruent brand perceptions among different stakeholder groups and the effect of congruent brand perceptions on brand performance were demonstrated. The

results emphasised the need for improved internal brand communications and highlighted the influence of consumer-facing staff on consumers' brand perceptions.

CHAPTER 1 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

1.1 *Introduction*

This chapter provides an overview of the research. The background and rationale for the research are explained and the contribution of the research to knowledge is identified. The methodology used is then outlined and the key results summarised. The limitations of the research are discussed. Finally, the organisation of the thesis is described and summaries of the chapters are provided.

1.2 Rationale for the study

Traditionally, both branding and marketing have focused on consumers and matching an organisation's offerings to consumers' needs (Ruekert and Walker, 1987; Keller, 1998). However, several trends are requiring that attention be re-focused within the organisation.

The first of these trends is the growing use of corporate branding. Olins (1989) described three levels of branding: 'monolithic' (corporate branding), whereby the organisation's name is the brand name; 'endorsed', in which both the organisation's name and a line or product name are used; and 'branded' (line brands), in which a product or line has a separate name from that of the organisation. The increasing emphasis on corporate branding (Mitchell, 1994; King, 1991; Berthon, Hulbert and Pitt, 1999; Macrae, 1999) has contributed to the wider involvement of both managers and staff in brand building. There is a shift away from the traditional system of the individual brand manager (Katsanis, 1999). Under corporate branding the team responsible for managing a brand is becoming larger and more diverse in its composition, increasing the complexity of co-ordinating brand management activities across the organisation. This is compounded by shifting team membership, resulting from the frequency with which marketing professionals typically change jobs as part of their career progression (Beyaztas, 1998). It is therefore important to examine how brand teams can ensure consistent brand perceptions among team members and to identify how they can work together more effectively to manage the corporate brand successfully.

The rise of corporate branding has also meant that staff have a much greater impact on consumers' perceptions, because they constitute the interface between the brand and consumers and *all* staff in the organisation, as representatives of the corporate brand, can affect the way the brand is perceived. Line brands provide cues about their values to consumers primarily through advertising, packaging, distribution and the people who use the brand. By contrast, with corporate brands staff convey cues about a brand's values (Hansen, 1972) and have a powerful impact on consumers' brand perceptions (Balmer and Wilkinson, 1991; Schneider and Bowen, 1985). Less control may therefore be exercised over corporate brands.

The diversity of the workforce too is growing as a result of social, economic and political changes (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998; Bhadury, Mighty and Damar, 2000). While diversity can provide a competitive advantage if everyone pulls in the same direction (Herriot and Pemberton, 1994), it also increases the potential for inconsistent perceptions and representation of the brand. So with service brands in particular, it is vital that all staff understand the brand as intended (Keller, 1999a). Authors such as Calzon (1987) have recounted the positive impact that engaging 'frontline' staff's commitment to a company's vision and goals can have. The greater staff's understanding of a corporate brand's identity, the better they should be able to respond appropriately to any problems with which they may be confronted in the course of their interactions with consumers. It is therefore important to examine how staff perceive the corporate brand and to identify factors that increase staff's understanding of the brand and their impact on brand performance.

Another trend is the growing importance of emotional rather than functional values in differentiating brands and providing a source of sustainable competitive advantage (de Chernatony, Harris and Dall'Olmo Riley, 2000; Schulz, Larsen and Hatch, 1999). This also requires greater internal focus, as emotional brand values rely on staff for their expression. Thus staff's behaviour can either reinforce a brand's advertised values or undermine the credibility of advertising messages.

The final trend is the shift in emphasis from the externally perceived brand image to the internally created brand identity. The latter entails the active creation of a brand and, under corporate branding, how an organisation wishes to be perceived. Consistency is crucial for the successful communication of the corporate brand identity (Abratt, 1989). For a consistent corporate brand identity to be projected, all members of an organisation need to understand and represent the brand. Organisations attempt to create a unique brand identity that will help to build a favourable brand reputation and confer a competitive advantage. The challenge is how to draw upon a brand's internal resources to create a unique, coherent brand identity and then communicate it externally to consumers.

Brands are multidimensional entities (de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998). For employees to present a coherent brand identity to consumers that is consistent with that intended by the brand team, all members of an organisation need to have congruent perceptions regarding the nature of their brand. However, research has shown that managers' perceptions may differ from each other (de Chernatony, Daniels and Johnson,

1994) and from sales staff (DelVecchio, 1998). The increasing heterogeneity of both brand team members and employees, together with the necessary involvement of a brand's entire workforce pose challenges to the formation of congruent brand perceptions and hence the creation and presentation to consumers of a coherent brand identity. The potential for misperceptions of a brand is substantial, both internally and externally through staff's interactions with consumers.

Little research has examined the internal perspective to explore managers' and staff's understanding of their brands and the impact of these on consumers' brand perceptions (Keller, 1999a). The purpose of this research is to identify the internal factors that influence the way that members of the brand team and staff perceive their brand's identity and the impact of these factors and internal brand perceptions on consumers' brand perceptions and brand performance. The findings from this research will help managers to appreciate how members of the brand team can work together more effectively and how best to involve staff in the brand building process.

This research contributes to knowledge in several ways. There are large bodies of research on the effects of top management team composition on organisational performance and on the effects of strategic consensus on organisational performance. Very few studies in the top management team literature have included intervening variables in their examination of team effects on performance (Carroll and Harrison (1998). Priem, Lyon and Dess (1999) emphasised the limitations of focusing purely on demographic proxies of top team composition and advocated the inclusion of intervening variables as more substantive heterogeneity constructs. Similarly, Jackson (1992) noted the need for a better understanding of the mediating processes through which team composition affects organisational outcomes. Reported links between team demographics and organisational performance have been attributed to unmeasured social psychological constructs (e.g.

Eisenhardt and Schoonhöven, 1990; Keck, 1991; Hambrick and D'Aveni, 1992). While demographic team composition is believed to be a crucial determinant of team functioning, there is little research on the impact of top management team demography on team functioning (O'Reilly, Snyder and Boothe, 1993). By contrast, this research involved developing a conceptual model showing hypothesised relationships between composition, processes, consensus (in terms of the levels of congruency between stakeholders about a brand's identity) and performance. The importance of establishing the impact of group processes was emphasised by Knight, Pearce. Smith, Olian. Sims, Smith and Flood (1999), who observed that group processes might be easier to manipulate than managers' demographic characteristics, should intervention be required.

Whilst research has been conducted with top management teams, there is a dearth of research with brand management teams. This research was conducted within a branding context, focusing on the brand management team instead of the top management team and examining brand perceptions rather than perceptions about strategy. Much of the group research literature, on which the research draws, is laboratory based and uses artificially created groups working on a discrete task for the purpose of the study (Paulus, 2000). By contrast, the current research was conducted with bonafide brand teams in real organisations. Some of the team literature is also based on restricted samples. For example, the chief executive officer, as a single respondent, has been used to provide data about the top management team, rather than collecting data from all of the team members themselves (e.g. O'Reilly, Snyder and Boothe, 1993; Bantel and Jackson, 1989[1]). Other studies have used team data from published sources rather than directly from team members, for example the Dun and Bradstreet Reference Book of Corporate Managements (e.g. Murray, 1989; Jackson, Brett, Sessa, Cooper, Julin and Peyrannin, 1991; Hambrick and D'Aveni,

[1] Bantel and Jackson (1989) collected team data from the Chief Executive Officer and the human resources executive.

1992; Krishnan, Miller and Judge, 1997) and Standard and Poor's Register of Corporations, Directors and Executives (e.g. Wagner, Pfeffer and O'Reilly, 1984).

The research reported here includes studies of three stakeholder groups: (i) brand team members, (ii) consumer-facing staff and (iii) consumers, to examine how they perceive the corporate brand and to identify factors that affect their brand perceptions. All three groups play a role in a brand's success. The brand team is responsible for designing and developing the brand strategy and formulating the brand's identity. Consumer-facing staff are responsible for representing the brand to consumers, who in turn are responsible for generating financial outcomes.

Finally, despite the growing interest in corporate identity, there is a lack of empirical research in this area (Balmer, 1998). Most of the research and literature on corporate identity is conceptual. The research reported in this thesis involved operationalising a model of corporate brand identity to examine the management of corporate financial services brands.

1.3 Overview of the methodology

A conceptual model, grounded in the literature, was developed, showing the relationships between a number of internal factors hypothesised to affect the congruency of brand perceptions and brand performance. Associated hypotheses were formulated. The model and hypotheses attempted to explain and extend de Chernatony's (1994) core hypotheses that congruent brand perceptions within the brand team and between the brand team, staff and consumers are positively related to brand performance.

The research was conducted in the financial services sector, an area in which branding, although less mature than fast-moving consumer goods (Colgate, 2000), is becoming increasingly important in the face of strong competition following deregulation.

The key brand contact in each company was interviewed to explain the research, gather information about the corporate brand and gain access to the three stakeholder groups (the brand team, consumer-facing staff and consumers). Postal questionnaires were then used to collect data from the three stakeholder groups about their perceptions of the corporate brand and factors hypothesised to affect their brand perceptions.

The data were collected in three studies: the first with members of the team responsible for managing the corporate brand; the second with consumer-facing staff; and the third with consumers. Twelve financial services organisations participated in the study, albeit one organisation participated in only the first and second studies and another organisation participated in only the first study.

1.4 Overview of the results

Path analyses of sections of the conceptual model indicated a lack of support for the hypothesised intervening variables between brand team diversity and team congruency about the brand's identity. However further path analyses indicated that other sections of the conceptual model proved a better fit. Congruency between brand team members about the brand's identity led to greater team-staff congruency, which led to greater team-consumer congruency, resulting in turn in better consumer-based brand performance. The path from team-staff communication through team-staff congruency to team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity also proved a good fit, although shortcomings in the existing team-staff communication were suggested. Other findings from the path analyses of sections of the conceptual model suggested that consumer-facing staff have a positive impact on consumer-based brand performance through potentially both their communication of the brand's identity to consumers and some other (unidentified) aspect of staff's communication with consumers.

Detailed analyses of the individual links in the conceptual model revealed a number of findings. Consistent with Wiersema and Bantel's (1992) prediction that group size would affect the level of demographic diversity, larger brand teams were found to be composed of members from significantly more diverse functional backgrounds. This provides evidence that the increasing size of the brand team under corporate branding is widening the range of skills, knowledge and information potentially available to the brand team.

However, whether larger, more diverse brand teams will be able to capitalise on the wider range of expertise potentially available to them is open to question. Although the number of significant correlations was comparatively small, the detailed analyses consistently indicated that greater diversity (in age, team tenure, company tenure, industry tenure, function, functional background and internal vs. external membership) was associated with less congruent perceptions about the components of a brand's identity. Yet, contrary to expectation, large brand team size was associated with greater congruency in team members' perceptions about the brand's identity.

There was weak evidence indicating that brand teams composed of younger members had more congruent perceptions about the brand's identity and were thus more aware of the need for brand marketing. This finding is consistent with brand marketing still being a fairly recent development in financial services.

The brand team's and staff's perceptions about the direction of team-staff communication differed significantly; the brand team were more likely to consider the team-staff communication two-way than were staff. This made it difficult to assess accurately the extent to which team-staff communication was two-way and its impact on the congruency of perceptions between the team and staff. It suggests that more explicit mechanisms need to be put in place to benefit from both the brand team's and staff's knowledge of the brand and its consumers.

Given that it was not possible to test the entire conceptual model in a single path analysis and the fact that only a subset of the variables was examined, it is not possible to accept or reject the model conclusively. However, some support for the model was evident. In addition, none of the direct correlations between brand team composition and consumer-based brand performance proved significant. It is thus tentatively suggested that the conceptual model may provide more explanatory power than omitting the intervening variables. Further research will obviously be required.

1.5 Limitations of the study

The principal limitation of the research related to the relatively small number of companies that could be studied. The financial services industry has experienced significant changes in recent years and a marketing orientation has only been adopted relatively recently (Durkin and Bennett, 1999). The number of brands that could be studied was affected by the changes still taking place in the financial services sector at the time of the research. For example, increasing competition has generated widespread mergers (Doman, Duchen and Markus, 1999; Howcroft and Hamilton, 1999) and a number of mergers and take-overs occurred during the research, which reduced both the actual and potential sample size of brands that could be included. Several organisations that had agreed to participate had to withdraw owing to take-overs or mergers that would impact on the brand. Other organisations expressed interest in the research, but were unable to participate owing to major restructuring, which meant that their brands were in a state of flux and it would have been inappropriate or politically sensitive for them to take part at the time.

Nevertheless, gaining the co-operation of ten financial services companies to take part in three studies and a further two companies in one and two studies may be considered an achievement. Many empirical studies of financial services companies reported in the literature have focused on only one company (e.g. Schneider and Bowen, 1985; Wilkinson and Balmer, 1996; Thompson, 1999; Richardson and Robinson, 1986; Brookes, 1996; Barnes, Lam and Lynch, 2000). Furthermore, the inclusion of three different stakeholder groups provides a rich set of data, enabling the brand management process to be examined from both internal and external perspectives. Thus, although the brand sample size constrained the analyses that could be performed at the brand level, the large amount of data collected at the stakeholder level enables greater confidence to be placed in the brand level data derived from it. By contrast, some studies with larger sample sizes of companies have relied on data from a single respondent in each company (e.g. O'Reilly, Snyder and Boothe, 1993; Daft, Bettenhausen and Tyler, 1993). The sample of financial services providers included in the research, however, represents a sizeable proportion of the population of providers of retail financial services in the UK.

1.6 Organisation of the thesis

The chapters of this thesis are summarised below:

Chapter 2 Brands and brand management

This chapter introduces the concept of brands and identifies the key issues in brand management. It opens by explaining the essence of a brand, why brands are important, types of branding and the evolution of brands. The management of brands is then examined. The focus on brand identity is explored, before describing the brand-based Identity-Reputation Gap Model of Brand Management, which was used to assess stakeholders' brand perceptions in the research. Approaches to evaluating a brand's performance are considered and the rise of the brand management team reviewed. The chapter concludes with a discussion of branding in financial services, the sector in which the research was conducted.

Chapter 3 Conceptual model of the factors affecting the congruency of brand perceptions

This chapter describes the conceptual model used in the research and the factors hypothesised to affect the congruency of brand perceptions among the brand team, staff and consumers. The chapter opens by outlining the conceptual model and the hypothesised relationships between its components. The factors in the model are then discussed in greater detail in relation to the literature on teams, consensus and performance, and the associated hypotheses tested by the research are identified. The chapter concludes by considering potential direct effects of brand team composition on aspects of brand management performance. A summary of the hypotheses tested in the research is provided at the end of the chapter.

Chapter 4 Research design

This chapter describes the research design. It opens with an overview of the methodology used and an explanation of how the three stakeholder studies relate to different sections of the conceptual model. The development of the questionnaires is then explained, the measures used in the research detailed and their choice justified. The research design is then described in greater detail, including the selection of the financial services sector for study, the recruitment of companies for participation, initial interviews with brand contacts in the companies and the three studies conducted with different stakeholder groups. The chapter concludes with an explanation regarding the structuring of the subsequent results chapters.

Chapter 5 Overview assessment of the conceptual model

This chapter provides an overview assessment of the conceptual model through a series of path analyses on sections of the model. It opens by examining a few key variables to give an initial overview of the goodness of fit of sections of the model, before examining the sections in more detail, inserting a larger number of variables sequentially into each path analysis. The chapter is thus a precursor to the three results chapters that follow, which explore the correlations between individual links in the conceptual model relating to the three stakeholder studies with the brand team, consumer-facing staff and consumers.

Chapter 6 Study 1: The brand team

This chapter reports the results of the first study: the brand team. It relates to the first part of the conceptual model.

Chapter 7 Study 2: Consumer-facing staff

This chapter reports the results of the second study: consumer-facing staff. It relates to the middle part of the conceptual model.

Chapter 8 Study 3: Consumers

This chapter reports the results of the third study: consumers. It relates to the last part of the conceptual model.

Chapter 9 Direct effects of brand team composition on brand management performance

The focus of the research was testing the conceptual model and the hypotheses relating to the links in the model. However, owing to the lack of empirical research on intervening variables in the literature and because the research enabled additional quantitative analysis to be conducted, potential direct effects between some of the key variables in the model were also explored. The literature has tended to concentrate on the effects of team composition on consensus (comparable to team congruency about the brand's identity in the research) and performance. Pfeffer (1983) proposed that direct effects between top management team composition and organisational performance would still occur because it would not be possible to include all possible intervening process variables. Thus, while the relationship between brand team composition and performance is expected to be mediated by communication and shared values, this chapter reports the results of examining the direct effects of team composition on various stages of brand management performance. This facilitated comparison with the literature and enabled the impact of including the mediating variables in the conceptual model to be assessed.

Chapter 10 Discussion

This chapter considers the contribution of the conceptual model in providing a framework for examining the impact of increasing brand team size and diversity on the process of brand management. It discusses the detailed findings from the three stakeholder studies in relation to the literature and the implications for brand management. Mechanisms for surfacing and harmonising brand perceptions that might be used to facilitate team processes and the need for internal brand communication programmes are examined. Finally, directions for future research are explored.

Chapter 11 Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter considers the contribution to knowledge provided by the research. It also identifies the conclusions that may be drawn from the research and makes recommendations about actions organisations might wish to consider to improve the process of brand management.

CHAPTER 2 BRANDS AND BRAND MANAGEMENT

2.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the concept of brands and identifies the key issues in brand management. It opens by explaining the essence of a brand, why brands are important, types of branding and the evolution of brands. The management of brands is then examined. The focus on brand identity is explored, before describing the brand-based Identity-Reputation Gap Model of Brand Identity, which was used to assess stakeholders' brand perceptions in the research. Approaches to evaluating a brand's performance are considered and the rise of the brand management team reviewed. The chapter concludes with a discussion of branding in financial services, the sector in which the research was conducted.

2.2 Defining a brand

Brands can be many things, including products (e.g. a Dyson vacuum cleaner), services (e.g. British Airways), companies (e.g. Microsoft), retail outlets (e.g. Tesco), people (e.g. Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber) and places (e.g. Ireland). A brand is distinguished from a commodity by its ability to differentiate itself in consumers' minds from competing offerings. From its early beginnings a brand represented an identifying mark of its producer, providing a means of distinguishing between offerings and guaranteeing the authenticity of an offering. However, the form of differentiation embodied by brands has become progressively sophisticated in an increasingly competitive world. This is evident in the contrast between early definitions, which tended to focus on the visual and symbolic differentiation between brands, and more recent definitions, which encompass the cognitive aspects of differentiating brands.

An example of an early definition is that of the American Marketing Association (AMA) (1960) in which a brand was defined as "*a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors*". However, as Murphy (1987) argued: "*modern, sophisticated branding is now concerned with a brand's 'gestalt', with assembling together and maintaining a mix of values, both tangible and intangible, which are relevant to consumers and which meaningfully and appropriately distinguish one supplier's brand from that of another*" (p.1-2). Consistent with this view, Kapferer (1997) defined a brand as "*an amalgamation of the tangible and intangible benefits by the efforts of the company*" (p.16).

Kapferer (1997) observed that the brand "*gives the product meaning and defines its identity in both time and space*" (p.17). The uniqueness of a brand was emphasised by King's (cited in Aaker, 1991, p.1) distinction between a 'product' as being something made in a factory, which can be copied by competitors and may be quickly outdated, and a 'brand' as something unique that is bought by customers and, when successful, can be timeless.

The concept of added value in relation to consumers is also intrinsic to modern definitions of a brand. For example, Keller (1998) proposed: "*a brand is a product ... that adds other dimensions to differentiate it in some way from other products designed to satisfy the same need*" (p.4).

From an extensive review of brand definitions in both the trade and academic literature, de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley (1998) identified 12 themes defining a brand: (i) legal instrument; (ii) logo; (iii) company; (iv) shorthand device; (v) risk reducer; (vi) identity system; (vii) image in consumers' minds; (viii) value system; (ix) personality; (x) relationship; (xi) adding value; and (xii) evolving entity. Based on this review, de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley proposed the following definition of a brand: "*The brand is a complex multidimensional construct whereby managers augment products and services with values and this facilitates the process by which consumers confidently recognise and appreciate these values*" (p.436).

The common themes in these modern definitions by leading brand experts are encapsulated in de Chernatony and McDonald's (1998) definition of a successful brand as "*an identifiable product, service, person or place, augmented in such a way that the buyer or user perceives relevant, unique added values which match their needs most closely. Furthermore, its success results from being able to sustain these added values in the face of competition*" (p.20).

2.3 The roles of brands

Brands play a number of roles that can benefit both the company and the consumer by facilitating the future income of the company and purchase selection and satisfaction for the consumer. These roles are discussed in the following two subsections.

2.3.1 The role of brands for companies

The brand has come to be viewed as a company's most important asset (Kapferer, 1997) as attested by the prominence of brand equity in the 1990s. Kapferer (1997) defined brand equity or 'accounting goodwill' as "*the monetary value of the psychological goodwill which the brand has created over time through communication investment and consistent focus on products, both of which help build the reputation of the name*" (p.24). Kapferer (1997) further asserted: "*the value of a brand comes from its ability to gain an exclusive, positive and prominent meaning in the minds of a large number of consumers*" (p.25). This view is substantiated by the famous example of Nestlé paying nearly three times the stock market value for Rowntree with its successful brands (e.g. KitKat) and their established positions in consumers' minds.

Successful brands not only represent guarantees of future income (Doyle, 1989), but also enable premium prices to be charged, act as barriers to entry from potential competitors and can facilitate brand extensions into new markets (Kapferer, 1997). They can also increase a company's bargaining power with distribution channels (Aaker, 1991).

A brand plays an important role in communicating with consumers by encapsulating its promise to consumers (Goodyear, 1996). It thus represents a communication device.

Finally, brands help consumers identify and recognise products (Berthon, Hulbert and Pitt, 1999), which can benefit the company because familiar brands are often chosen in preference to unknown brands (Aaker, 1991).

2.3.2 The role of brand for consumers

Brands play several roles for consumers. They aid identification (Kapferer, 1997) and reduce consumers' search costs (Berthon, Hulbert and Pitt, 1999) by helping them interpret, process and store large amounts of information about products (Aaker, 1991). This has a practical value for consumers through saving time and effort expended in purchase decision-making (Kapferer, 1997). A brand may also facilitate consumers' purchase selections by providing added value that differentiates a brand from competitors (de Chernatony and McDonald, 1998).

Brands may increase consumers' confidence in their purchase selections (Aaker, 1991) and reduce perceived risk by providing consumers with an assurance of quality (Berthon, Hulbert and Pitt, 1999), thereby increasing satisfaction (Aaker, 1991). Brands thus play an optimisation role, enabling consumers to be sure of choosing the best offering in a category for a particular purpose (Kapferer, 1997).

Brand associations also contribute to consumers' satisfaction (Aaker, 1991). For example, social risk may be reduced through the status and prestige symbolised by a brand (Berthon, Hulbert and Pitt, 1999). Increasingly, brands play a role in expressing consumers' identities (Goodyear, 1996; Kapferer, 1997; Lury, 1998).

Other roles of a brand for consumers include: providing continuity (i.e. satisfaction resulting from familiarity), eliciting hedonistic rewards and meeting ethical values (Kapferer, 1997). The latter is becoming increasingly salient as consumers become more sophisticated and are concerned with the ethics of the activities of the company that owns a brand.

2.4 Corporate branding versus line branding

Brand naming approaches form a spectrum, from using an organisation's name as the brand name (corporate branding) (e.g. the BBC), through strong endorsement of a product name by the organisation's name (e.g. Microsoft Office), weak endorsement of a product name by the organisation's name (e.g. Nestlé KitKat), to a completely separate product name with no visible association with the organisation's name (line branding) (e.g. Whiska's cat food produced by Mars Incorporated) (Olins, 1989). An increasing emphasis on corporate rather than line branding has been noted (Mitchell, 1994; King, 1991; Berthon, Hulbert and Pitt, 1999; Macrae, 1999). Berthon, Hulbert and Pitt (1999) attributed this shift to increasing retailer and consumer power. Feldwick and Bonnal (1995) suggested that consumers' growing interest in environmental and ethical issues were a contributory factor in the emphasis on corporate branding. Hankinson and Cowking (1997) proposed several other factors: the need to satisfy shareholders by raising the profile of the organisation owning famous brands; the requirement to support weak product brands and the need to facilitate new product launches without the associated expense of building new brands.

Line brands' values are conveyed to consumers through advertising, packaging, distribution and the people who use the brand. By contrast, with corporate brands, staff provide cues about a brand's values (Hansen, 1972), as they represent the interface between the corporate brand and consumers. Obviously the level of staff involvement depends to a large extent upon the position of an offering on the product-service continuum. The greater the service nature of an offering the greater the involvement of staff. However, with corporate brands all staff within the organisation that is responsible for an offering may affect consumers' brand perceptions, whereas with line brands staff of the organisation behind an offering do not represent the brand and are thus further removed from consumers.

Corporate branding involves a more holistic approach and emphasises the creation of relationships rather than segmentation (Macrae, 1996). Staff's roles are changing; they are now frequently being required to act as their brand's 'ambassadors' (Hemsley, 1998). Thus staff strongly influence consumers' brand perceptions (Balmer and Wilkinson, 1991; Schneider and Bowen, 1985) and play an important role in communicating a brand's emotional values, which are a vital source of sustained competitive advantage (de Chernatony, Harris and Dall'Olmo Riley, 2000). Staff are also responsible for delivering advertising promises (George and Berry, 1981). They are thus central to brand building and their behaviour can either reinforce a brand's advertised values or undermine the credibility of advertising messages. Furthermore, the points of contact for a corporate brand are more diverse than for a line brand (King, 1991). Consequently, corporate brands and the way they are presented to and perceived by consumers cannot be controlled in the same way as line brands. Every contact with a member of a corporate brand's staff constitutes a 'moment of truth', in which the corporate brand is created in the minds of its customers and ultimately determines the success or failure of the corporate brand (Calzon, 1987). People's daily performance fluctuates with the result that service delivery is not always consistent (Richardson and Robinson, 1986; Levitt, 1981). In banking, a sector positioned toward the service end of the product-service continuum and in which corporate branding has predominated, Morvis (1984 – unpublished research reported by Richardson and Robinson 1986) found that of the 40% of the bank accounts closed annually owing to poor service, 13% resulted from rudeness or unhelpfulness by a member of staff, 11% because the financial services organisation was perceived as cold and impersonal, and 16% through poor service in general. The importance of customer service was also underlined by Aaker (1989), who reported that customer service was the second most frequently cited source of competitive advantage identified by strategic business unit managers.

One of the key differences between line branding and corporate branding is therefore that the latter calls for greater focus within the organisation to ensure that all staff understand the brand and present a coherent and consistent corporate brand to external stakeholders through every point of contact with them. Richardson and Robinson (1986) proposed that consistent service delivery required internal marketing to help staff understand what was expected of them and their effect on consumers' perceptions. Furthermore, the increase in the size and diversity of the composition of brand management teams require greater co-ordination of brand activities across the organisation. Davidson (1999) reported that corporate brand management was frequently "*diffused and confused*" (p.28) because departments handled different stakeholders inconsistently. Brand consistency is crucial to sustaining brand associations' strength and favourability (Keller, 1999b). Organisations therefore need to ensure that the brand information communicated through employees' interactions with consumers concurs with how senior management wishes the organisation to be perceived (Kennedy, 1977). The importance of employees as targets for brand-building activities is gaining recognition (e.g. Davidson, 1991; Ackland, 1998; Hemsley, 1998; Mistry, 1998; Wilson, 1998; Tilley, 1999; Johansson and Hirano, 1999). King (1991) stressed the need for internal communication about the corporate brand and its values. Wilkinson and Balmer (1996) noted that corporate brand management was more complex than line brand management and required consideration of both the internal and external environment and attention to corporate communications.

2.5 The evolution of brands

As already noted, the rise of corporate branding is one of the proposed reasons for the increasing sophistication of consumers and their interest in the environmental and ethical stances of companies behind brands (Feldwick and Bonnal, 1995). This has contributed to the evolution of greater brand sophistication.

Goodyear (1996) proposed an evolutionary spectrum of increasing brand and consumer sophistication. The higher the stage of a brand on the evolutionary spectrum, the greater the role the brand's societal values play in consumers' brand choices. The four evolutionary stages Goodyear identified were: (i) *seller's market*, defined by manufacturer power and focusing on selling; (ii) *marketing*, focusing on persuasion; (iii) *classic brand marketing*, whereby brands are supported by emotive advertising and exploratory research; and (iv) *customer-driven marketing*, in which the brand becomes an icon, owned by both the manufacturer and the consumer.

The concept of a brand evolution spectrum is paralleled by a continuum of consumerisation (Goodyear, 1996). The increasing sophistication of consumers is widely acknowledged, with consumers described as 'marketing literate' (Lury, 1998) and 'super-consumers' (Goodyear, 1996), able to recognise and analyse marketing approaches.

2.6 Brand identity

Commensurate with the increasing sophistication of brands, the emphasis in the branding literature has shifted from brand image to brand identity. For example, Kapferer (1997) argued that the central concept of brand management was brand identity rather than brand image and that true brand management began "*with a strategy and a consistent, integrated vision*" (p.18). Whereas brand image focused on consumers' most recent perceptions of a brand and brand differentiation, brand identity is about how managers and employees make a brand unique (Baker and Balmer, 1997). Brand management is a holistic system (Katsanis, 1999) and brand identity involves all members of an organisation.

While there is a growing literature on 'corporate identity', less has been written on 'brand identity', or 'corporate brand identity' where a corporate brand naming strategy is employed. The difference between corporate identity and brand identity is essentially that the latter takes a branding perspective and focuses on identity as means of augmenting a brand and differentiating it from its competitors through its identity characteristics. It may also enable a brand to provide added value to its consumers by resonating with their own sense of identity and thus assist them in expressing their identity through their patronage of the brand. Owing to the prevalence of corporate identity literature, this will be reviewed first, before focusing specifically on brand identity and corporate brand identity.

Whereas early work on corporate identity focused on an organisation's visual identity or logo (van Riel and Balmer, 1997), these are increasingly viewed as just one aspect of corporate identity. Corporate identity is now more commonly defined as *what an organisation is* (e.g. Baker and Balmer, 1997; Balmer, 1998; van Rekom, 1997; Moingeon, 1999) or, a little more specifically, "*the factors relating to the organization which define what the organization is*" (Wilkinson and Balmer, 1996, p.23). The role of corporate identity in differentiating an organisation from others is also widely cited (e.g. Marwick and Fill, 1997; Baker and Balmer, 1997; Moingeon and Ramanantsoa, 1997). In their seminal paper on corporate identity, Albert and Whetten (1985) defined corporate identity as the organisational characteristics that were the most central, enduring and distinctive. The International Corporate Identity Group's 'Strathclyde Statement' (van Riel and

Balmer, 1997) describes corporate identity in terms of an organisation's ethos, aims and values that create a sense of individuality that differentiates a brand.

Identity management cuts across departments (Olins, 1989). The role of staff in communicating an organisation's identity is gaining recognition (Baker and Balmer, 1997). However, if staff's views and expectations are fragmented across the organisation, this is likely to result in multiple identities and confusion among different stakeholder groups (Marwick and Fill, 1997). Olins (1989) argued that "*consistency in attitude, action and style underlines the corporate identity*" (p.7). Consistency between the internal and external perceptions of corporate identity is particularly important, because internal practices are becoming more transparent (Schulz and Ervolder, 1998). Greater emphasis is therefore needed on achieving a coherent corporate brand identity that is understood throughout the organisation and provides a focus for employees' diverse organisational roles and activities.

In contrast to the consumer-centred concept of brand image, brand identity is firm-centred and thus more under the organisation's control. However, the level of control is relative. Staff's behaviour and attitudes are key inputs into a service organisation's identity (Wilson, 1997). Whilst an organisation has more control over its staff than its consumers, because an organisation's identity is heavily dependent on staff for its expression it is therefore still subject to variations in staff's behaviour.

In an increasingly competitive environment corporate brands need to be proactively created and projected. Brand identity also represents an important asset because it is difficult to imitate (Johansson and Hirano, 1999). Thus increasingly corporate identity is viewed as central to a company's long-term success (Olins, 1989; Wiedmann, 2000). Many authors have argued that all organisations have an identity (Olins, 1989; Abratt, 1989;

Bernstein, 1984; van Riel and Balmer, 1997), albeit that identity may be good, bad or unknown (Baker and Balmer, 1997). Reger (1998) observed that while corporate identity could be a source of competitive advantage, it could also be a source of disadvantage because it was dependent on the past and difficult to change, as other authors have also noted (Olins, 1989; Moingeon and Ramanantsoa, 1997).

Despite broad agreement about what the concept of corporate identity means, there is a notable absence of agreement in the literature about the elements that comprise corporate identity. Balmer and Stotvig (1997) described corporate identity as encompassing corporate strategy, philosophy, business scope, history and the range and type of products and services offered by an organisation. van Riel and Balmer (1997) argued that a key determinant of corporate identity was corporate personality, formed from a composite of values and beliefs. The French school of thought views identity as consisting of two parts: organisational culture (visible) and organisational imagery (hidden) (Moingeon and Ramanantsoa, 1997). Lux (quoted in van Rekom and van Riel, 2000) proposed seven dimensions of corporate identity: (i) needs; (ii) distinctive competencies; (iii) attitude; (iv) constitution; (v) temperament: (vi) heritage: and (vii) goal orientation. Roberts (1998) suggested that identity included an organisation's purpose, vision, strategy and business objectives, encompassing its products and services, and the shared values of the organisation and its employees in the way that they behaved.

This lack of agreement about the components of corporate identity may partly explain the dearth of empirical research in this area noted by Balmer (1998). In a review of corporate identity models used by consultancies, Balmer and Soenen (1999) noted a lack of consensus about the components in the models, but discerned two common elements: vision and the organisation's core values. Whilst there is little agreement about the elements of corporate identity itself, a degree of consensus was apparent regarding the elements in models of corporate identity *management*. These elements are: *culture* (Baker and Balmer, 1997; Marwick and Fill, 1997; Schmidt, 1995; Hatch and Schulz, 1997); *personality* (Olins, 1989; Markwick and Fill, 1997; Balmer, 1998); *purpose* (Olins, 1989: Marwick and Fill, 1997); and *values* (Olins, 1989; Marwick and Fill, 1997; Schulz and Ervolder, 1998).

By contrast, the only two models of *brand* identity that were identified provided greater elaboration about their constituent components. Kapferer (1997) proposed a *brand*-based view of identity, represented as six facets of a prism: physique (its functional features and tangible added value), personality (its character i.e. the kind of person it would be if it were human), culture (the brand's set of values), relationship, reflection (the reflection of the consumer as he or she wishes to be seen) and self-image (the internal, as opposed to external, mirror). Building on Kapferer's (1997) brand-based model of identity, de Chernatony (1999) developed the Identity-Reputation Gap Model of Brand Management, which was used to assess different stakeholders' brand perceptions in the research undertaken.

2.7 The Identity-Reputation Gap Model of Brand Management

de Chernatony's (1999) Identity-Reputation Gap Model of Brand Management conceptualises a brand's identity as comprised of six components: (i) the *vision* for the brand and (ii) *corporate culture*, which drive (iii) the brand's desired *positioning*, (iv) the brand's *personality* and (v) the *relationships* between staff, customers and other stakeholders, all of which are then (vi) presented to reflect stakeholders' actual and aspirational self-images (*presentation*). The six identity components interact and are mutually reinforcing. The model conceptualises brand management as the process of narrowing the gap between a brand's identity and its reputation and formed the framework within which the research was conducted. Its components are described in the following subsections.

2.7.1 Brand vision

At the centre of brand identity are brand vision and culture. Vision encompasses (i) the brand's purpose – its reason for being – (ii) its core values, which provide a system of guiding principles (Collins and Porras, 1996) and (iii) the brand's envisioned future 5-10 years from hence. The brand's purpose needs to be communicated clearly to employees to inspire them and help them to understand how their roles relate to it. The brand's purpose is more philosophical and is translated into the more practical brand's goal. The brand's values also need to be conveyed to staff, because values guide behaviour, particularly in novel situations (Wilkins and Ouchi, 1983). Rockeach (1973) defined a value as "*an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence*" (p.5). A brand's values effectively say: 'This is what we believe in and this is how we think our business should be conducted'. For example the Virgin brand's values are value for money, quality, innovation, fun and a sense of competitive challenge (Virgin, 2001). A brand should have a set of unique values relevant to its target consumers. However, the consistency of the perceptions of the brand's values are also important. In envisioning the brand's future, the role the brand needs to play to achieve that future should be identified.

2.7.2 Corporate culture

Corporate culture encapsulates employees' values and assumptions, which also guide their behaviour. Consequently, managers need to ensure alignment between corporate culture and the brand's values to avoid inconsistent behaviour, which could have a detrimental impact on stakeholders' perceptions of the brand. Corporate culture can provide a source of competitive advantage (Bettencourt and Brown, 1997). However the culture must be appropriate, adaptive and attentive to the needs of all stakeholders (Kotter and Heskett, 1992). Managers therefore should determine which are the few core values that need to remain unchanged and let less central values adapt to changing circumstances.

2.7.3 Brand positioning

The brand's positioning describes what the brand is, for whom it is intended and what it offers. Rossiter and Percy (1996) described positioning as: 1) To ... (target audience) ... 2) is the brand of ... (category) ... 3) that offers ... (benefit). For example Cadbury's Fuse was positioned as: 1) To *people on the go* (target audience) Fuse is *the brand of chocolate snack bar* (category) that offers *a filling snack with high chocolate content and a variety of ingredients inside* (benefit). Positioning thus involves identifying competitive advantages that differentiate the brand and enable the brand to occupy a distinctive place in consumers' minds relative to competing brands (cf. Kotler, Armstrong, Saunders and Wong, 1996). A set of functionally distinct capabilities that differentiates the brand may be derived from the brand's core values using means-end theory (Gutman, 1982).

2.7.4 Brand personality

The personality metaphor represents the brand's emotional characteristics, which in part evolve from the brand's core values. The brand's personality traits are further developed through associations with the 'typical user' imagery, the brand's endorsers and consumers' contacts with the organisation's employees (Aaker, 1997). It is therefore important that both employees and external brand communications convey the brand's personality consistently. The brand's personality is also influenced by the brand's positioning, so an integrated approach to branding can reinforce the synergy between them.

2.7.5 Relationships

Once the brand's personality has been fostered, a reciprocal relationship evolves between the brand and its consumers. This is characterised by the values inherent in the brand's personality. Through their interactions with consumers, staff have a significant impact on a brand's relationship with its customers. Consistency in these interactions is crucial, since relationships evolve continually and changes from either partner can destabilise them (Fournier and Yao, 1997). Appropriate types of relationships need to be identified from the brand's core values and managers need to ensure that staff understand them.

2.7.6 Brand presentation

The last component of a brand's identity entails deriving suitable presentation styles to present the brand's identity in such a way as to reflect consumers' aspirations (akin to Kapferer's (1997) 'reflections') and self-images (Belk. 1988; Hogg and Mitchell, 1996). Consumers respond more favourably to brands and companies that they perceive as consistent with their self-images (Dowling, 1994). Brands' symbolic meanings also assist consumers in understanding and expressing aspects of their selves to others (McCracken. 1993). The symbolic meaning of a brand is affected by both advertising and staff's interactions with consumers. Hence managers need to ensure that advertising and staff's behaviour are consistent with the brand's desired symbolic meanings.

2.7.7 Reputation

The Identity-Reputation Gap Model proposes that brands be managed by narrowing any gaps between a brand's identity and its reputation. By adapting Fombrun and Rindova's (1996) definition of reputation, a brand's reputation is defined as a collective representation of a brand's past actions and results that describes the brand's ability to deliver valued outcomes to multiple stakeholders. Brand image has traditionally been the focus of a brand's external evaluation and was viewed by van Rekom (1997) as the external perception of an organisation's identity. However, brand image fluctuates, reflecting consumers' most recent perceptions (Marwick and Fill, 1997; Balmer, 1998).

By contrast, a brand's reputation is more stable and encapsulates the distillation of multiple images over time (Fombrun and van Riel, 1997; Marwick and Fill, 1997; Balmer, 1998). Marwick and Fill (1997) also posited that "*reputation is a reflection of the historical, accumulated impacts of previously observed identity cues and possible transactional experiences*" (p.398). van Riel and Balmer (1997) argued that the objective of corporate identity management was to create a favourable reputation among an organisation's stakeholders. Similarly, Baker and Balmer (1997) argued that the aim of corporate identity management was to achieve a favourable corporate image, which, over time resulted in a favourable corporate reputation. Reputation is most powerful when competing products look alike or cannot be seen (Herbig and Milewicz, 1995).

As identity is a product of its history (Moingeon and Ramanantsoa, 1997) and reputation is built up over time, reputation may be considered a more appropriate measure of corporate brand performance. Reputation also provides a more representative assessment of a brand's performance because it represents the evaluations of all stakeholders. By incorporating both internal (brand identity) and external (brand reputation) components, de Chernatony's (1999) model provides a balanced approach to brand building.

2.7.8 Narrowing the gaps between a brand's identity and its reputation

Gaps between a brand's identity and its reputation can arise from a lack of congruence between identity components, through inconsistent presentation of the identity and through the intervention of environmental factors, such as accidents, tampering and media reporting. For example, Fombrun and van Riel (1997) noted that intermediaries, such as market analysts, professional investors and reporters, could refract information among an organisation's stakeholders, who rely on such sources to supplement their own, incomplete information.

Familiarity with stakeholders' perceptions is vital to corporate brand management (Balmer, 1995). Staff are not only sources of information about the brand to consumers, but also the recipients of feedback from consumers. Managers need to use staff's information about consumers' feedback to improve their understanding of stakeholders' perspectives (Ind, 1997). It is therefore important to engage staff in reducing the gaps between their brand's identity and its external perception, represented by its reputation among stakeholders.

2.8 Measures of brand performance

Measuring brand performance is important as a means of assessing the appropriateness and success of a brand's identity and associated branding activities. Not only should measures of brand performance provide feedback to guide future brand design and development, but also help organisations to understand the basis of their brand's success or lack of it. One of the reasons why many small businesses fail after making initially promising starts is because they do not understand why they have been successful so are unable to repeat their success (Cokayne, 1991), an observation equally applicable to brands. Performance measurement systems are also important because they influence managers' and employees' behaviour (Kaplan and Norton, 1992).

Whilst there is a large body of literature on companies' performance and marketing performance, there is no definitive measure of *brand* performance (de Chernatony, Dall'Olmo Riley and Harris, 1998). Performance measures are often discussed in the literature in terms of success, excellence, criteria and brand equity. Brand equity is "*a set of assets ... that are linked to the brand name (its name and symbol) and add (or subtract) value to the product or service being offered*" (Aaker, 1991, p.4). Brand equity frequently involves attempting to put a financial value on a brand. For example, Biel (1997) defined brand equity as "*the additional discounted future cash flow achieved by associating a brand with an underlying product or service*" (p.201).

A review of these literatures revealed a wide range of measures. David Aaker, a key proponent of brand equity, proposed five measures: brand loyalty, name awareness, perceived quality, brand associations and other proprietary brand assets (e.g. patents, trademarks, channel relationships) (Aaker, 1991). However, this set of measures has been criticised for lacking an underlying theory (McWilliam, 1993). Keller (1993) distinguished between 'direct' measures of customer-based brand equity, which assess the impact of brand knowledge on consumers' responses to various elements of a company's marketing programme, and 'indirect' measures, such as brand awareness and brand image. In a review of the brand equity literature, Feldwick (1996) noted that brand equity was a vague concept and although there was no accepted way of measuring it, identified four common measures: price/demand measures; behavioural measures of loyalty; attitudinal measures of loyalty and awareness/salience measures. In the marketing performance literature, Hanson, Grønhaug, and Wärneryd (1990) identified the most frequent performance measures as profitability, sales volume, market share, share of voice and share of mind. Similarly, in a review of measures of marketing success used in leading academic marketing journals, Ambler and Kokkinaki (1997) reported the following as key measures: sales and sales growth (47%), market share (36%) and profit contribution and customer preference/purchase intent (23% each).

Despite the broad spectrum of approaches to measuring performance, they may be considered as falling into two categories: business-based measures and consumer-based measures (de Chernatony, Dall'Olmo Riley and Harris, 1998). These are discussed in the following subsections.

2.8.1 Business-based measures

Business-based measures are essentially financial measures. The many business-based measures used by companies include: cash flow, operating income, return on equity, return on investment, shareholder value, return on shareholders' funds, earnings per share, earning growth rate, sales volume, return on sales and sales growth (Eccles, 1991; Kaplan and Norton, 1992; Hanson, Grønhaug, and Wärneryd, 1990; Doyle, 1992). The most frequently used include: profitability; shareholders' equity; and market share (de Chernatony, Dall'Olmo Riley and Harris, 1998).

However, there has been increasing criticism of firms' preoccupation with short-term, financial measures of performance (e.g. RSA, 1995; Industrial Relations Services (IRS), 1997). Business-based measures have several limitations. Their short term focus, when used to manage a brand, can impair the brand's long-term survival or even contribute to its demise (Aaker, 1991; Doyle, 1992). Financial measures also focus on the past and provide limited information about how to create value in the future (Kaplan and Norton, 1992; Doyle, 1992; McWilliams, 1996) and how to evaluate the effectiveness of internal processes (Atkinson, Waterhouse and Wells, 1997). Furthermore, as Atkinson, Waterhouse and Wells (1997) observed: "*performance measurement systems based primarily on financial performance measures lack the requisite variety to give decision makers the range of information they need to manage processes*" (p.25), committing a company to being reactive rather than proactive in addressing organisational change. Hanson, Grønhaug, and Wärneryd, (1990) argued that the measurement of excellence should enable the future to be forecasted.

2.8.2 Consumer-based measures

Levitt (1981) argued that a customer could be considered a more precious asset than an organisation's tangible assets listed on the balance sheet, because the latter could be bought more easily. This is consistent with one of the key roles of a brand as being its meaning in the minds of consumers (Kapferer, 1997). In Katanis' (1999) conception of the brand management process the consumer was seen as providing the 'true feedback' into the start of the process. Consumer-based brand performance measures may thus be used to evaluate the success of a brand management system. Consumer-based measures are also important because they make employees' and managers' day-to-day work more meaningful than financial measures since they can influence such measures (McWilliams, 1996).

Several authors have defined successful brands in terms of having a strong brand image or personality (e.g. Doyle, 1989; Pitta and Katsnis, 1995). Similarly, de Chernatony, Dall'Olmo Riley and Harris (1998) identified consistent, well understood brand perceptions as a key consumer-based criterion of brand success.

Customer satisfaction is widely regarded as "*the most important route to high and sustained marketing performance*" (Piercy, 1995, p. 24) and as "*central to the marketing concept*" (Fournier and Glick, 1999, p.5). Customer satisfaction is also gaining recognition among organisations as a critical measure for monitoring effectiveness in a competitive environment (Thompson, 1998; Normann and Ramírez, 1994; Naumann, 1995). Kasper and Schreuder (1985) reported that consumer satisfaction is considered "*the core element of consumer reporting*" (p.267). Furthermore, links have been reported between satisfaction and overall firm performance (Ittner and Larcker. 1998; Anderson, Fornell and Lehmann. 1992. cited by Fournier and Glick, 1999).

Brand loyalty is also regarded as a crucial factor in successful brand outcomes (Chaudhuri. 1996) and has been recognised for at least three decades in the marketing literature (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). Slater, Olson and Reddy (1997) considered customer loyalty one of the most important consumer-based performance measures and as having the most direct impact on financial performance. Similarly, Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) reported that purchase loyalty resulted in greater market share and that attitudinal loyalty led to higher relative brand price.

The role of brand reputation in brand management was discussed in Section 2.7.6. Lievens and Moenaert (2000) included the enhancement of corporate reputation as a non-financial measure of new financial services product performance. Rankin Frost and Cooke (1999) reported that corporate reputation reflects "*the substance and experience of an organisation*" (p.84) and that increasingly boards are recognising that a sound corporate reputation is necessary to achieve business success. Similarly, Yoon, Guffey and Kijewski (1993) reported that a good reputation was regarded as an asset that could augment consumers' expectations about an organisation's offering and reduce uncertainty about its performance. The importance of reputation as an evaluation of performance has also been advocated by other authors (e.g. Thompson, 1998; Herbig and Milewicz, 1995).

2.8.3 A balanced approach to measuring brand performance

Brands require long-term investment and the payoffs can take decades, yet there "*are no easy, defensible ways to measure the long-term effects of marketing actions*" (Aaker, 1991, p.11). Storey and Easingwood (1999) argued: "*success does not seem to be associated with just one dimension. It is the combination of dimensions that produce high performance in terms of overall success*" (p.200). Similarly, Doyle (1992) concluded that performance was a multidimensional concept. Thus many authors recommend a balanced approach, using both business-based (i.e. financial measures) and consumer-based measures of performance (e.g. Faulkner and Bowman, 1992; Eccles, 1991; Kaplan and Norton 1992; Doyle 1992; Welch, 1993; McWilliams 1996; Atkinson, Waterhouse and Wells, 1997; de Chernatony, Dall'Olmo Riley and Harris; 1998). Slater, Olson and Reddy (1997) pointed out that financial performance was an outcome, over which it was too late to exercise control. They advocated instead a multidimensional approach that included indicators that reflected the customer perspective and provided an opportunity for actions to be taken to affect the final, financial outcome. Thompson (1998) also argued that focusing solely on financial measures was unsatisfactory, because they do not take sufficient account of cause and outcome issues.

Storey and Easingwood (1999) reported that while organisations use a large number of measures of performance, these tend to be based on financial criteria or sales levels; consumer-related measures such as customer satisfaction, customer acceptance estimates and the length of the product's life were rarely employed. The emphasis on short-term, financial measures has been attributed to several reasons: the ease with which they may be obtained (Aaker, 1991; Irmscher, 1993); the short-term perspective of brand managers and other key people who remain in post only a few years, owing to regular job rotation (Aaker, 1991); the fact that these managers are frequently judged on the basis on quarterly financial results (Irmscher, 1993) and the tendency for what is measured to affect managers' behaviour (Eccles, 1991;Thompson, 1998).

Yet Griffin and Page (1996) found consumer-related measures to be considered more useful by managers. McWilliams (1996) reported that companies were beginning to realise that financial measures such as profitability were a poor guide by which to navigate and were starting to use a mixture of consumer-based and business-based measures. It is also important to use a variety of types of performance measures because the level of success indicated may differ across measures. Thompson (1998) reported that companies might score highly on financial performance but poorly on reputation and vice versa.

With regard to financial services, Worcester (1997) argued that consumer-based data should not only receive equal weight to financial data, but that consumer-based data should also feed back into strategic decision-making. Calzon (1987) advocated measuring success in terms of the company's promises to consumers. If a company fulfils its promises, then consumer-based performance such as satisfaction and loyalty should ensue. Conversely, failing to satisfy external stakeholders will prevent long-term success from being sustained (Thompson, 1998).

2.9 Brand Management Teams

Whilst corporate branding and brand identity involve all members of an organisation, brand management generally rests with a 'brand management team'. The brand management team is responsible for developing and implementing the brand's strategy (Veloutsou and Panigyrakis, 1998). Under corporate branding this team is increasing in size and involving managers from across the organisation, not just those in marketing. This section traces the history of approaches to structuring the management of brands.

In the late 1800s/early 1900s branding was generally undertaken by brand champions such as owner-entrepreneurs (Hankinson and Cowking, 1997). The concept of a brand management team first emerged in the 1930s, when Proctor and Gamble set up a team to manage its soap brand Camay (Aaker, 1991). However, Proctor and Gamble's team-based approach was not widely followed by other organisations until much later. Until recently, individual brand managers were typically responsible for brands (The Economist, 1994; Katsanis, 1999). The brand manager system was criticised for the short tenure and short-term focus of its incumbents (Low and Fullerton, 1994). However, there has been a shift away from the traditional system of the individual brand manager (Katsanis, 1999). This is set to increase with the growing emphasis on corporate branding.

King (1991) argued that the brand team responsible for managing a corporate brand should reside at the top level and be small, flexible, interactive and multi-disciplinary, composed of the following members: the Brand Designer, the Communications/Marketing Director, the Production Director and the Personnel Director, led by the CEO. It has been noted that teams often lack the right mix of skills (Katzenbach, 1997). However, as the size and diversity of brand management teams grows, the mix of skills is expected to change likewise. In a survey of brand managers in the UK, Hankinson and Cowking (1997) reported that brands were being managed by a range of individuals with differing expertise and with differing levels of managerial seniority. Furthermore, the role of external brand team members has been predicted to grow (Veloutsou and Panigyrakis, 1998).

Katzenbach (1997) defined "a real team" as "a *small number* of people with *complementary skills* who are committed to a *common purpose, performance goals*, and an *approach* for which they hold themselves *mutually accountable*" (p.84). Katzenbach (1997) also proposed that "a real team" needed to be genuinely committed to a purpose that gave a sense of direction and indicated what was required to achieve its performance potential. Yet Veloutsou and Panigyrakis (1998) observed that the roles, responsibilities, positions and status of individual brand team members are not always clearly identified and a group may not necessarily constitute a team because members do not always interact. In addition, the number and type of active brand team members vary.

Brands need continuous management and investment if they are to achieve sustained success and remain relevant to consumers (Doyle, 1989). The challenge of achieving cohesive brand management in the face of increasing team size and diversity is further compounded by shifting team membership, resulting from marketing professionals' typically frequent job changes for career progression (Beyaztas, 1998). A survey by Winmark Ltd in association with The Chartered Institute of Marketing (1999) revealed that, on average, marketing professionals change jobs approximately every two years. Aaker (1991) also noted that brand managers and other key personnel were often regularly rotated, staying in any one position for between just two and five years. It is therefore important to examine how brand teams can ensure consistent brand perceptions, which will be required for co-ordinating brand management activities. Mutual accountability is crucial to a team's success (Katzenbach, 1997). To avoid fragmentation, more effective teamwork in brand management is needed, together with greater understanding of the roles of different departments (Hankinson and Cowking, 1997).

Notwithstanding the importance of the brand management team in designing and developing a brand's strategy, the importance of all individuals in an organisation in marketing the corporate brand is becoming increasingly recognised (Macrae, 1999). As the interface between a corporation and its consumers, employees play a vital role in representing the reality of the corporate brand and its consistency, as previously argued.

Having examined the importance of brands and key issues in their management, this chapter concludes by considering branding in financial services, the sector in which the research was conducted.

2.10 Branding in financial services

Branding in financial services is a more recent development than in fast-moving consumer goods (Colgate, 2000). Historically, financial services brands have exhibited little brand differentiation (Watters and Wright, 1994; Jones, 1999) as financial innovations were rapidly copied. Lacking perceived differences between suppliers (Levy, 1996) and with a large number of suppliers offering 'similar' products focusing primarily on costs or financial benefits, financial services brands have been almost considered a commodity (Free, 1996). Consequently, financial services have been slow to evolve branding and marketing practices (McKechnie and Harrison, 1995; Colgate, 2000). Indeed Goodyear (1996) identified financial services as functioning at Stage 2, *marketing through persuasion*, on her four-stage brand evolutionary spectrum (discussed in Section 2.5).

However, financial services branding is becoming increasingly important in the wake of heightened competition following deregulation (Angur, Nataraajan and Jahera, 1999; Denby-Jones, 1995; Taylor, 1999; Euromonitor, 2000), the proliferation of new financial products (Devlin and Wright, 1995; Storey and Easingwood, 1999) and the threat from new entrants with established retail brands such as Marks and Spencer, Tesco and Virgin

(Watters and Wright, 1994; Cleaver, 1999; Howcroft and Hamilton, 1999). Even a decade ago, Olins (1989) observed that the old distinctions between banks, building societies and insurance companies were breaking down. In response to technological and competitive change, many financial services organisations are now following a 'bancassurance' strategy involving horizontal diversification of their portfolios, which staff play a central role in selling to consumers (Beckett, 2000). Deregulation has effectively removed the traditional demarcations that once divided financial services providers into discrete markets, resulting in diversification of activities and direct competition between previously segregated providers (Howcroft and Hamilton, 1999).

Corporate branding has long predominated in financial services (Olins, 1989). Morison (1997) discerned three principal reasons for the dominance of this approach: the acquisition of smaller banks by the larger ones; economies of scale; and the lack of pressure to differentiate owing to the commercial and regulatory environment which existed until recently. One of the few exceptions was Midland Bank's experiment with the endorsed brands 'Vector', 'Orchard' and 'Meridian' in the mid-1980s. However, these did not prove successful; they were expensive to administer, difficulties were experienced in communicating which consumer segments they were intended to target and their delivery was insufficiently differentiated (Morison, 1997). Midland Bank's later introduction of the endorsed brand 'First Direct' proved far more successful, in part owing to its delivery differentiation which focused on the telephone rather than the branch network (Morison, 1997).

More recently, some traditional financial services providers have introduced endorsed brands for their Internet Banks (e.g. Smile from The Co-operative Bank and Intelligent Finance from the Halifax) in an attempt to shed the legacy of their parent brands and compete with new entrants that are unhindered by such legacies.

While financial services have historically had strong generic identities (e.g. banks vs. building societies), more recently providers have attempted to create individual identities in their quest for differentiation (Wilkinson and Balmer, 1996). However, Wilkinson and Balmer (1996) concluded that banks had failed to develop identifiable corporate identities, succeeding merely in creating distinctive visual identities. They attributed this failure to: undue focus on the visual aspects of identity at the expense of corporate philosophy and culture; insufficient market-orientation; competition from new entrants; and the legacy of the generic identity. Morison (1997) suggested that another reason for the lack of differentiation in the brand identities of financial services providers was that they were all responding to competition in similar ways and trying to change their identities in a similar fashion. Morison (1997) also stressed the need to ensure a high level of congruence between all aspects of a financial services brand's identity across the organisation.

Branding financial services presents several challenges. Choosing a financial services product represents an important, complex decision for consumers, entailing high risk and lacking the opportunity for trial or sampling alternatives prior to purchase (Jones, 1999). It also tends to involve intangible and latent benefits (Colgate, 2000), for example security from insurance or the maturation of an investment, making it difficult for consumers to evaluate an offering both before and after purchase (McKechnie and Harrison, 1995). Theoretically, selecting a financial services provider should involve consumers in extended problem solving, as it represents an important, high risk purchase with few perceived differences between offerings. Yet Jones (1999) implied that financial services actually entailed low involvement. Financial services are perceived as uninteresting (Levy, 1996), representing a means to an end (e.g. the purchase of a house) rather than an end in itself (Denby-Jones, 1995; Free, 1996). The selection of a financial services provider is further complicated by the proliferation of products that are difficult to compare, which can confuse both customers and staff (Olins, 1989; Easingwood, 1986; Lievens and Moenaert, 2000).

In addition to their intangibility and their inseparability of production and consumption, which financial services have in common with other service offerings, McKechnie and Harrison (1995) identified two characteristics particularly relevant to financial services: fiduciary responsibility and two-way information flows. Fiduciary responsibility relates to a financial services provider's responsibility for managing its customers' funds and providing customers with financial advice. In effect, it involves the exchange of promises between the financial services provider and its customers. With regard to the second characteristic, two-way information flows, financial services involve a series of extended two-way interactions in which customers provide personal information and the financial services provider statements.

With limited search qualities available, customers are likely to base their purchase decisions on experience and credence qualities (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996; Ennew, 1999). Customers' decisions about the likelihood of a financial services provider fulfilling its promises tend to be based on indicators such as a financial services provider's image, size and longevity; customers are more concerned with service quality than the outcome's technical quality (McKechnie and Harrison, 1995). The complexity of the service means that consumers need to have confidence in staff's specific skills (e.g. financial management) (Ennew, Wright and Thwaites, 1993). Yet research has reported that 50% of consumers of services such as banking have complained that staff did not have the necessary knowledge and skills to perform their jobs well (Mitchell, 1999). Johnston (1997) found that the main sources of consumer satisfaction in retail banking related to intangible aspects such as staff's commitment, attentiveness, friendliness and courtesy. Similarly, Laroche, Rosenblatt and Manning (1987) reported that speed of service and factors related to the competence and friendliness of staff were the most important considerations in selecting a bank, after location convenience.

Emotional values are particularly important in financial services branding because many consumers do not have the knowledge or interest in finance to evaluate the offerings on the basis of performance, so are more inclined to use emotional factors as shorthand devices for decision making. Emotional values are becoming key in achieving sustained brand differentiation as functional values are easily emulated by competitors (Aaker, 1991; de Chernatony, Harris and Dall'Olmo Riley, 2000; Tomkins, 2000).

Reputation is also very important, especially when competing products look alike or cannot be seen (Herbig and Milewicz, 1995), as is the case for financial services brands. Many studies have reported that a good reputation is one of the most important factors consumers consider in selecting a bank (Storey and Easingwood, 1999).

After investing effort in selecting a financial services provider customers exhibit inertia if satisfied with their choice and are unlikely to incur switching costs of expending further time and effort searching for an alternative provider (McKechnie and Harrison, 1995). However, this situation is beginning to change. Loyalty is declining in the financial services sector (Burton, 1994). Consumers of financial services are becoming more empowered, as technology reduces search-buy costs and inertia (Howcroft and Hamilton, 1999). Consumers are also growing increasingly dissatisfied (Johnston, 1997) and critical of banking practices (Thompson, 1999). This poses an additional challenge to successful branding in financial services.

Despite the increasing importance of the marketing and branding of financial services, Strieter, Gupta, Raj and Wilemon (1999) reported that bank brands were being managed by managers hired in from packaged goods companies or by internal managers chosen for their banking or product knowledge rather than their marketing expertise. The immaturity of marketing in financial services was demonstrated by Easingwood and Arnott's (1991) observations that marketing techniques were most frequently used by financial services organisations with large internal marketing research departments, while other financial services organisations tended to use marketing techniques occasionally or erratically or rely on external consultants. Thus there is a need to examine the impact of the expanding size and composition of the teams responsible for managing corporate brands in financial services and the extent of their success in creating coherent brand identities that are understood by consumer-facing staff and well-received by their consumers.

2.11 Chapter summary

This chapter has examined the importance of brands and brand management. It provides the background to the research, by identifying the key issues and challenges facing the teams responsible for managing corporate brands, concluding with a consideration of branding in financial services, the sector in which the research was conducted. In particular, the implications of growing brand team membership and the involvement of staff under corporate branding were highlighted. The need for more sophisticated branding, including the creation of a coherent brand identity and a balanced approach to assessing brand management performance was explained.

CHAPTER 3 CONCEPTUAL MODEL OF THE FACTORS AFFECTING THE CONGRUENCY OF BRAND PERCEPTIONS

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the conceptual model used in the research and the factors hypothesised to affect the congruency of brand perceptions among the brand team, staff and consumers. The chapter opens by outlining the conceptual model and the hypothesised relationships between its components. The factors in the model are then discussed in greater detail in relation to the literature on teams, consensus and performance, and the associated hypotheses tested by the research are identified. The chapter concludes by considering potential direct effects of brand team composition on aspects of brand management performance. A summary of the hypotheses tested in the research is provided at the end of the chapter.

3.2 Overview of the conceptual model

Effective brand management requires the creation of a coherent brand identity and consistent communication of that identity (Kapferer, 1997). Owing to the paucity of empirical research on the brand management of brand identity, this research draws on the top management team (TMT) and strategic consensus literatures to identify implications for the branding context. Whilst recognising the limitations involved, there are close parallels between the questions addressed in this research and those explored in the TMT and strategy domains. Jackson (1992) noted that the processing of strategic issues involved individuals across the organisation; the same is true of corporate branding. Furthermore, given that this research examines branding at the corporate level, the comparison is deemed justifiable.

Olins (1989) proposed that corporate identity required consistent attitudes, action and style. Duncan and Moriarty (1998) argued that strategic consistency relating to the way corporate values were presented was key to the management of consumers' perceptions, how a product performed and how a brand was identified and positioned. Strategic consistency requires co-ordinated action to ensure that a coherent message is delivered uniformly to all stakeholders. This is particularly important for corporate branding, where multiple stakeholders interact with numerous staff across many departments in a firm (Mitchell. 1997). Consistent communication of a brand's identity is also important because stakeholders may belong to more than one stakeholder group and inconsistent messages may undermine a brand's credibility (Rankin Frost and Cooke, 1999).

Yet research has demonstrated that managers' perceptions may differ from each other (de Chernatony, Daniels and Johnson, 1994) and from sales staff (DelVecchio, 1998). People in different levels and in different departments of an organisation tend to have differing views and information (Tjosvold, 1987). As previously noted, corporate branding is giving rise to larger brand teams, which necessitate greater interaction between managers from different departments to co-ordinate activities. The composition of top management is also becoming increasingly diverse owing to, for example, a greater number of women entering top management positions, a wider age range resulting from flatter organisational structures and the growing use of teams composed of members from various disciplines (Schruijer and Vansina, 1997). Brand teams also have shifting membership as brand managers tend to remain in a post for only a couple of years (Low and Fullerton, 1994; Winmark, 1999). While laboratory studies suggest that diversity in team characteristics can have beneficial effects on decision making and creativity, evidence from field studies tends to highlight the detrimental impact of diversity in team characteristics on group functioning

(Williams and O'Reilly, 1998). Furthermore, top management team composition has been identified as a potential antecedent of consensus (Dess and Priem, 1995). Thus the level of diversity in brand team members' characteristics was expected to affect the congruency of brand team members' perceptions about the brand.

Consensus among top management in decision-making is an important determinant of organisational performance (e.g. Dess, 1987). However, larger brand teams composed of more diverse individuals with frequently changing membership are likely to result in a wider range of perspectives and expertise, increasing the chances of a lack of congruence between managers' perceptions of their brand. This lack of congruence is expected, in turn, to have a detrimental impact on the congruence of staff's brand perceptions across the organisation. Furthermore, workforces in general are becoming increasingly diverse in their characteristics owing to increased geographical mobility (Schruijer and Vansina, 1997). Whilst diversity amongst staff can be a source of competitive advantage because it may be viewed favourably by customers and can facilitate innovation (Herriot, 1997), it may increase the likelihood of differences in perceptions of a brand.

Given that brand management is conceptualised by de Chernatony (1999) as managing the six components of a brand's identity (brand vision, corporate culture, positioning, personality, relationships and presentation), there is much scope for misperceptions about the nature of a brand and for misdirection of activities.

de Chernatony (1994), in his research proposal for the overall project within which this research is embedded, posited that a greater consensus among members of a brand's management team would facilitate more *consistent* leverage of brand resources, and greater congruence between the brand team's, employees' and consumers' brand perceptions would enable more *effective* leverage of brand resources, thereby enhancing brand performance.

de Chernatony's (1994) core hypotheses were:

H_a: There is a positive correlation between brand performance and the congruence of the brand team's perceptions about the nature of their brand.

H_b: There is a positive correlation between brand performance and the congruence between the brand team's and employees' perceptions about the nature of their brand.

H_c: There is a positive correlation between brand performance and the congruence between the brand team's and consumers' perceptions about the nature of their brand.

Managers need to understand the factors that affect the congruency of brand perceptions between the brand team, employees and consumers and how they can increase the congruency of these perceptions. A team's demographic composition has been identified as a crucial determinant of team functioning (O'Reilly, Snyder and Boothe, 1993). Demography refers to a team's composition with regard to basic attributes such as age, gender, tenure and education (Pfeffer, 1983). This research focuses on the impact of brand team composition in terms of diversity in a range of team characteristics (age, gender, team tenure, company tenure, industry tenure, function, functional background, education, internal vs. external membership and geographical dispersion) on the management of corporate brands in the financial services sector. However, two other team characteristics, mean team tenure and team size, are examined in addition to team diversity, as they are also reported to affect team characteristics and the congruency of perceptions. Demography theory assumes that demographic characteristics affect social dynamics, which influence organisational outcomes (Korac-Kakabadse, Korac-Kakabadse and Myers, 1998). For example, Pfeffer (1983) argued that demography was an important causal factor that affected a number of intervening processes and subsequently outcomes. Several authors have stressed the importance of considering intervening variables in the literature on top management teams and performance, but noted that few studies have done so (Carroll and Harrison, 1998; Priem, Lyon and Dess, 1999). Furthermore, Williams and O'Reilly (1998) attributed the lack of agreement about the definition of performance across studies to a failure to distinguish between the generation of ideas and their implementation, and argued that both creation and implementation of ideas were required for successful group performance.

This research explores the impact of brand team diversity characteristics, mean team tenure and team size on the formulation of a brand's identity (brand team congruency), the internal implementation of the brand's identity (brand team-staff congruency), external implementation of the brand's identity (brand team-consumer congruency) and brand performance (in terms of consumer-based and business-based measures). In each case, congruency was assessed as the level of agreement between stakeholders' perceptions about the components of a brand's identity as conceptualised in de Chernatony's (1999) Identity-Reputation Gap Model of Brand Management (described in Chapter 2, Section 2.7). The method for calculating congruency is explained in Chapter 4, as is the operationalisation of de Chernatony's components of brand identity. The conceptual model is illustrated in Figure 1.

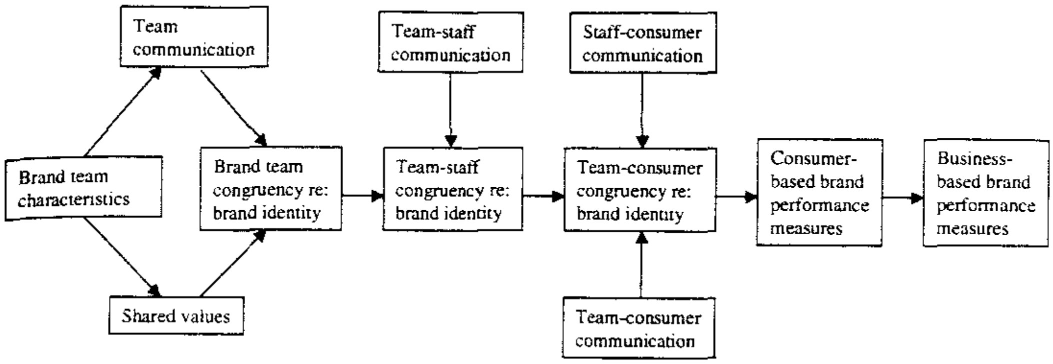

Figure 1. Model representing the hypothesised relationships between internal factors affecting the management of corporate brands

A brief overview of the rationale for the conceptual model is now provided, before considering the implications of brand team diversity on brand management and examining the individual links in the model in greater detail.

The degree of team diversity with regard to the characteristics of managers in top management teams has been linked to: the congruency of their behaviour and attitudes (Bettenhausen, 1991); strategic consensus (Knight, Pearce, Smith, Olian, Sims, Smith and Flood, 1999); shared values (Bantel and Jackson, 1989); ease of communication (Wagner, Pfeffer and O'Reilly, 1984); and organisational performance (Smith et al., 1994). A review of the management and social psychology literature suggested that communication and shared values were likely to mediate the impact of brand team diversity in team characteristics on the congruency of team members' perceptions of their brand's identity.

Although not part of the conceptual model, a possible link was explored between shared values and team communication in the conceptual model as shared values are commonly reported to lead to greater communication (Glick, Miller and Huber, 1993), whereas differences in values can lead to breakdowns in communication (Ruekert and Walker, 1987).

People who share similar values tend to perceive things in similar ways (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998). Shared values also serve to guide behaviour (McDonald and Gantz, 1991). It was therefore hypothesised that shared values would affect the congruence of brand perceptions among members of the brand team.

Group processes are most often examined in terms of social integration, communication and conflict (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998). Communication was considered to be the group process most pertinent to the research because communication plays an important role in the formation of congruent perceptions (e.g. Gilly and Woolfinbarger, 1998; Bowman and Ambrosini, 1996). Internal and external communication have also been described as critical factors in expressing corporate identity (Olins, 1989; Moingeon and Ramanantsoa, 1997; Baker and Balmer, 1997). Other authors have suggested that communication may mediate the relationship between diversity and performance (e.g. Simons, Pelled and Smith, 1999; Smith et al., 1994). Maznevski (1994) noted that diverse groups that performed well succeeded in integrating their diversity and proposed that effective communication facilitated integration, enabling these groups to capitalise on their diversity.

Maier (1967) argued that poor communication between managers and those responsible for implementation was responsible for many organisational problems. It is argued that communication will be important for sharing information and surfacing perceptions within the brand team and between the brand team and consumer-facing staff, which should help in arriving at congruent perceptions of their brands. Communication between consumer-facing staff and consumers should in turn facilitate congruent brand perceptions between the brand team and consumers, as should communication between the brand team and consumers. Effective communication should enable incongruent perceptions to be identified and resolved. Congruency among brand team members about the brand's identity is also expected to facilitate greater congruency between the brand team and consumer-facing staff about the brand's identity, because brand team members with congruent perceptions should communicate the brand's identity more consistently across the organisation. In turn, greater congruency between the brand team and consumer-facing staff is expected to lead to greater congruency between the brand team and consumers about the brand's identity. Successful communication of the brand's identity to consumers should then result in better consumer-based brand performance.

Previous research (de Chernatony, Dall'Olmo Riley and Harris, 1998) indicated that both consumer-based and business-based measures of brand performance should be used to assess a brand's success. Since consumers must first decide to purchase a brand before a financial outcome is realised, it is further hypothesised that superior consumer-based brand performance will lead to superior business-based brand performance. This hypothesis is consistent with the findings of Easingwood and Arnott (1991) that senior marketing executives in financial services organisations identified the customer interface as having the greatest impact on company performance. Indeed, a number of authors view consumer-based performance measures as leading indicators of final, financial performance outcome measures (e.g. Hansen, Grønhaug and Wärneryd, 1990; Kaplan and Norton, 1992; Slater, Olson and Reddy, 1997). However, consumer-based and business-based performance measures may not provide consistent indications. Thompson (1998) reported that companies might score highly on financial performance but poorly on reputation and vice versa. Thus the research examined possible links between consumer-based and business-based measures of brand performance.

The next section outlines the implications of the literature relating to team characteristics for brand management. The linkages in the model are then examined in greater detail, inferences for facilitating the process of managing brands explored and associated hypotheses identified.

3.3 Overview of the implications of brand team characteristics for brand management

For the purpose of the research, diversity is defined as the degree to which brand team members differ with regard to a salient attribute. The terms 'homogeneous' and 'heterogeneous' are used in the literature to describe teams with low and high levels of diversity respectively. However, for clarity, the terms 'diverse' and 'similar' are used in this thesis. Diversity is not a uni-dimensional construct (Smith et al., 1994; Simons, Pelled and Smith, 1999). The types of team diversity most frequently examined in the diversity literature include age, gender, team and organisational tenure, and educational and functional background (e.g. Smith et al., 1994; Bantel and Jackson, 1989; Williams and O'Reilly, 1998; Knight et al., 1999). There are three key theoretical paradigms in research on demography and diversity in organisations: social categorisation, similarity/attraction and information/decision making (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998).

According to social categorisation theory (Tajfel, 1981; Turner, 1987) individuals engage in social comparison with others to maintain a high level of self-esteem. Individuals do this by defining themselves and others as individuals or members of a group in terms of social categories, such as age, organisational membership, status and religion (Williams and O'Reilly. 1998). Social categorisation can lead to biased behaviour or attitudes towards individuals categorised as in-group or out-group members (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998).

The similarity/attraction paradigm predicts that similarity between individuals increases their attraction to each other (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998). There is substantial research evidence supporting this association (Tsui and O'Reilly, 1989). Similarity between individuals provides positive reinforcement of their attitudes and beliefs (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998).

The information/decision-making paradigm proposes that diversity in group composition confers positive benefits in terms of increased skills, information and knowledge (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998). Jackson (1992) argued that the potential benefits of diversity may emanate from team members having wider social and knowledge networks on which to draw, rather than simply the range of skills and knowledge of team members themselves. Girndt (1997) suggested that diversity in occupational background was most likely to yield diversity in knowledge.

The social categorisation and similarity/attraction paradigms predict that diversity will have a negative impact on team processes and consequently performance. By contrast, the information/decision-making paradigm predicts that diversity will have a positive effect on performance owing to the increased range of skills and information available to the team.

The literature indicates that teams with similar characteristics demonstrate better group processes, such as communication, than teams with diverse characteristics, and tend to exhibit greater consensus. However, teams with high levels of similarity are susceptible to several effects that may ultimately impair performance. One such effect is 'false consensus' (Ross, Greene and House, 1977). This is the tendency for people to overestimate the prevalence of their own behavioural choices and judgements and disregard alternative perspectives. The effect is accentuated by people's tendency to associate with similar others, limiting their perspectives through restricted exposure to a narrow sample of people and resulting in greater overestimation of the consensus for their position in the overall population (Jones and Roelofsma, 2000). The implication for brand management teams is that teams with similar characteristics may have more congruent perceptions about their brand's identity, but that identity may not have been accurately formulated to appeal to the brand's target consumers. This effect is likely to be exacerbated by the tendency for teams to become more similar over time, as a result of greater turnover among dissimilar members (Wagner, Pfeffer and O'Reilly, 1984; Jackson et al., 1991) and the tendency for organisations to recruit similar members (Schneider, 1987).

Teams with similar characteristics are more cohesive (Wagner, Pfeffer and O'Reilly, 1984), which increases their tendency to another potentially limiting effect, 'groupthink' (Janis, 1972). Groupthink is where the pursuit of consensus constrains the consideration of alternative perspectives, resulting in "*a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgement*" (Janis, 1972, p.9). High-ranking, autonomous teams are especially vulnerable to groupthink (Sundstrom, Meuse and Futrell, 1990). As with false consensus, groupthink may impair the brand team's formulation of a brand's identity to appeal to consumers successfully. Empirical research has indicated that the comprehensiveness of strategic decision processes is associated with better firm performance, particularly in turbulent industries (Simons, Pelled and Smith, 1999).

Teams composed of members with diverse characteristics are less prone to such effects and are reported to have the potential for greater creativity and innovation. However, they too are subject to potentially detrimental influences. Teams with diverse characteristics tend to experience greater conflict and impoverished group processes, such as communication (Lichtenstein, Alexander, Jinnett and Ullman, 1997). However, the implication is that teams with diverse characteristics may perform better than teams with similar characteristics if they are able to overcome their difficulties in group functioning.

Two characteristics expected to affect the level of diversity in team characteristics were mean team tenure and brand team size. The principal focus was on team diversity, and although mean team tenure and brand team size do not relate to links in the conceptual model, the impact of these latter two characteristics were included in the research to supplement the picture. It was expected that teams with longer mean team tenure would be composed of members with more similar characteristics, given the tendencies for higher turnover among dissimilar team members (Wagner, Pfeffer and O'Reilly, 1984; Jackson et al., 1991) and recruitment of similar members (Schneider, 1987). Wiersema and Bantel (1992) suggested that group size would affect the level of demographic diversity. Increasing brand team size was therefore expected to increase the level of diversity in brand team members' characteristics.

The literature relating to the individual links in the conceptual model will now be reviewed and the associated research hypotheses identified. The implications from the literature relating to the supplementary exploratory analyses of mean team tenure and brand team size are also discussed where they are also expected to affect variables in the conceptual model.

3.4 The effects of team characteristics on team communication

A wide range of team characteristics have been examined in the literature relating to communication. In the following literature review, the types of characteristics are specified where reported. The effects of team characteristics on communication are considered first in terms of team diversity and secondly in terms of team similarity. The impact of mean team tenure and team size on communication are then considered as supplementary explorations. This section concludes with an examination of different types of communication.

Team diversity

Both laboratory and field studies over the last 40 years have provided considerable evidence that team diversity, particularly with regard to age and tenure, can have a negative impact on communication (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998). For example, diversity has been reported to decrease communication (Chatman, Polzer, Barsade and Neale, 1998) and lead to message distortion and more communication errors (Barlund and Harland, 1963; Triandis, 1960). Diversity in occupation may create difficulties in interaction and lead to poor behavioural integration (Hambrick, 1994). Successful communication of intended meaning between members is essential for group integration (Maznevski, 1994). Communication barriers may arise between different specialisations in organisations because of differences in language, norms, values and coding schemes (Lievens and Moenaert, 2000). A shared language and a certain amount of knowledge overlap are important for a team to work effectively and evaluate team members' contributions (Joldersma, 1997; Paulus, 2000). Language problems in teams with diverse characteristics can make the effective exchange of knowledge difficult (Maznevski, 1994) and reduce communication frequency (March and Simon, 1958). In addition, managers' functional experience can generate both selective perception and selective *im*perception (Beyer et al., 1997; Wiersema and Bantel, 1992). People in different roles not only perceive different information, but may perceive the same information in a different way (Maznevski, 1994). Negative effects on communication have been reported for diversity in age (Zenger and Lawrence, 1989), gender, function, education and tenure (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998). The effects have been reported to be stronger for tenure than age and stronger for education than both tenure and function (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998).

Another type of diversity that may affect brand management teams is geographic dispersion. Not only are brand teams becoming larger, but the role of external brand team members has been predicted to grow (Veloutsou and Panigyrakis, 1998). Blau (1977) argued that spatial segregation countered the positive impact of group diversity. Greater physical distance has been reported to negatively influence communication (Paris, Salas and Cannon-Bowers, 2000).

Team similarity

Conversely, similarity between individuals facilitates communication between them (Rogers and Agarwala-Rogers, 1976; Wagner, Pfeffer and O'Reilly, 1984; Harrison, Price and Bell, 1998). For example, O'Reilly, Snyder and Boothe (1993) reported that similarity in tenure resulted in positive team dynamics. Shared experience and greater understanding between people assist communication between them (Williamson, 1971) and help to develop shared objectives (Joldersma, 1997). The greater the similarity between individuals, the better able they are to interpret, as well as initiate, communication (Robbins, 1991). Similarity also increases communication frequency and integration (Lincoln and Miller, 1979; O'Reilly, Caldwell and Barnett, 1989; Zenger and Lawrence, 1989).

Based on the implications from the literature on team diversity and team similarity, the research tested the following hypothesis:

H1: The greater the diversity in team characteristics, the less frequent the team communication.

Supplementary explorations

(i) Mean team tenure

People accustomed to working with each other communicate more readily (Zenger and Lawrence, 1989). Team members need to appreciate each other's knowledge and skills (Paulus, 2000), which should increase over time. People who interact with each other tend to be positively disposed towards each other (Hinds, Carley, Krackhardt and Wholey, 2000). As people interact they get to know each other better, which can reduce conflict and create greater group cohesiveness (Robbins, 1991). Familiarity, as well as similarity, may make people more comfortable with each other and thus more likely to enter into constructive debate (Chatman, Polzer, Barsade and Neale (1998). Furthermore, Gruenfeld, Mannix, Williams and Neale (1996) found that group members who were familiar with each other were better able to use unique information. Organisational tenure can also contribute to the development of a shared language, which reflects similarities between individuals in interpreting, understanding and responding to information (Korac-Kakabadse, Korac-Kakabadse and Myers, 1998). Katz (1982) reported that communication decreased as the length of group tenure increased, because group members felt able to anticipate each other's views, resulting in increased specialisation. It was therefore expected that longer mean brand team tenure would be associated with less frequent communication among brand team members.

(ii) Team size

The effects of team size were also examined, to ascertain the impact of brand teams becoming larger as well as more diverse in their membership. Communication among members has been reported to decline as group size increases (Iaquinto and Fredrickson, 1997). Thus it was expected that larger brand team size would be associated with less frequent communication among brand team members.

Communication is an important and complex concept. However, the questionnaire methodology used in the research limited the aspects of communication that could be studied and precluded some important aspects such as non-verbal communication. This thesis does not therefore claim to provide a comprehensive assessment of communication, but examines some aspects of it. In addition to looking at the overall frequency of communication, the research explored the communication channels used to convey information and the formality of communication. The following subsection therefore considers aspects of communication discussed in the literature to provide a context for the supplementary exploratory analyses of aspects of communication reported later in the results sections.

Aspects of communication

Communication channels differ in their richness with regard to: (i) the opportunity for feedback; (ii) the ability to communicate multiple cues; (iii) the ability to tailor messages to the circumstances; and (iv) the ability to communicate ambiguous or subjective information (Daft and Lengel, 1984; Daft and Huber, 1987). The richness continuum ranges from face-to-face at the richest end to a written mass-media document at the leanest end (Daft, Bettenhausen and Tyler, 1993). Face-to-face communication is better when information is ambiguous, whereas lean channels are better for conveying quantitative data accurately (Daft, Bettenhausen and Tyler, 1993). Rogers and Agarwala-Rogers (1976) noted that a crucial difference between mass media dissemination of information and interpersonal communication was that the latter enabled feedback, an inherent part of communication, and was hence more effective.

The research explored the frequency of 'direct' (face-to-face and telephone) and 'indirect', or text-based, (written, e-mail and facsimile) communication. These are comparable to the interpersonal and mass media communication described by Rogers and Agarwala-Rogers (1976) and the rich and lean media of Daft, Bettenhausen and Tyler (1993). The implications from the literature are that direct communication should be more effective than indirect communication, but the evidence is not conclusive. Chatman, Polzer, Barsade and Neale (1998) suggested that dissimilar co-workers were less likely to interact in person, preferring instead memos, which they argued were less effective in communicating information and resolving problems. Glick, Miller and Huber (1993) predicted that functional background diversity would be associated with lower levels of rich communication (face-to-face and telephone communication) among upper-echelon managers, albeit they actually found the opposite in their research.

The research also examined the impact of formality of communication. Kraut, Fish, Root and Chalfont (1990) emphasised the importance of informal communication, reporting that physical proximity promoted more frequent communication and particularly more informal communication. Allen and Cohen (1969) identified informal communication as important in the transfer of information. Informal communication has been defined as unscheduled, highly interactive and rich communication with no prearranged agenda (Stanton and Ashleigh, 2000). Physical proximity is reported to influence interaction in the early stages, but over time physical proximity becomes less important and communication is determined more by technical competence and personal attraction (Rogers and Rogers-Agarwala, 1976). However, the typically short tenure of marketing managers may prevent teams reaching the stage where physical proximity ceases to be an issue. Smith et al. (1994) reported that team size and team diversity with regard to experience were negatively related to the informality of communication. In other words, the larger the team size and the greater the team diversity, the more formal the communication.

3.5 The effects of team characteristics on shared values

Team diversity vs. team similarity

Teams with dissimilar characteristics are likely to differ with respect to values (Bantel and Jackson, 1989) and to exhibit greater conflict (Murray, 1989). Conversely, members of a team with similar characteristics are more likely to have similar experiences and perspectives (Robbins, 1991) and hence members of a team with similar characteristics are more likely to have similar values (Murray, 1989). For example, individuals of similar age, educational and occupational backgrounds are more likely to have similar values (Murray, 1989). Team members from the same discipline or with similar organisational tenure are also more likely to have shared values (Lichtenstein, Alexander, Jinnett and Ullman, 1997). Korac-Kakabadse, Korac-Kakabadse and Myers (1998) identified job tenure, organisational tenure and age as influential factors shaping leaders' philosophy, attitudes and behaviour in organisations. The research tested the following hypothesis:

H2: The greater the diversity in team characteristics, the lower the extent of shared values.

Supplementary explorations

(i) Mean team tenure

Over time, team members become more similar, as the result of two effects. Firstly, team turnover is higher among more dissimilar members (Wagner, Pfeffer and O'Reilly, 1984). People select themselves both into and out of settings, with the result that people are apt to interact with similar people (Schneider, 1983). Secondly, there is a tendency for organisations to recruit similar members (Schneider, 1987). Thus it was expected that the longer the mean team tenure, the greater would be the extent of shared values.

(ii) Team size

As team size has been suggested to affect the level of team diversity (Wiersema and Bantel, 1992), it was also predicted to affect the extent of shared values among brand team members. Thus it was expected that the larger the size of the brand team, the lower would be the extent of shared values.

3.6 The effects of shared values on team communication

As explained in Section 3.2, a possible link between shared values and team communication was explored, although it was not part of the conceptual model. As previously noted, it is commonly argued that shared values lead to greater communication (Glick, Miller and Huber, 1993), whereas differences in values can lead to breakdowns in communication (Ruekert and Walker, 1987) and interpersonal conflict (Bantel and Jackson, 1989). Thus the research tested the following hypothesis:

H3: The greater the extent of shared values among brand team members, the more frequent the team communication.

3.7 The effects of team communication on team congruency about the brand's identity

Communication plays an important role in the formation of congruent perceptions (Gilly and Woolfinbarger, 1998; Bowman and Ambrosini, 1996). The more frequent the communication, the more likely that those interacting will develop similar perceptions of the organisation and how it operates (Wagner, Pfeffer and O'Reilly, 1984). Glick, Miller and Huber (1993) argued that frequent communication among upper-echelon managers enabled information to be exchanged and was essential to effective organisational functioning. While brand teams with similar characteristics are expected to communicate with each other more readily, the more frequently members of brand teams with diverse characteristics communicate the more opportunities they have to surface their brand perceptions and resolve divergent views. Eisenhardt, Kahwajy and Bourgeois (1997) found that frequent interaction between team members created the mutual confidence and familiarity required for the expression of constructive disagreement. This should be of particular benefit to teams with diverse characteristics, which tend to experience conflict. Thus the following hypothesis was tested:

H4: The more frequent the brand team communication, the greater the team congruency about the brand's identity.

Supplementary explorations

As explained in Section 3.3.2, the type and formality of team communication were also expected to affect the level of team congruency about the brand's identity. Since direct (or 'rich') communication facilitates feedback (Rogers and Agarwala-Rogers, 1976) and face-to-face communication is better when information is ambiguous (Daft, Bettenhausen and Tyler, 1993), direct communication was expected to improve the congruency of brand team members' perceptions about the brand's identity.

Grinyer and Norburn (1977-1978) reported that their results suggested that more informal communication channels or information processes were associated with better financial performance. Chatman, Polzer, Barsade and Neale (1998) proposed that "*the real work of an organization gets done through informal face-to-face interactions*" (p.773). Kraut, Fish, Root and Chalfont (1990) reported that informal communication between colleagues led to greater familiarity and liking, which in turn should facilitate shared perspectives. Thus the research also examined these aspects of team communication to provide a more detailed picture of the effects of communication on the congruency of team members' brand perceptions.

3.8 The effects of shared values on team congruency about the brand's identity

People who share similar values tend to perceive things in similar ways (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998; Kalliath, Bluedorn and Strube, 1999). Similarly, Dess and Priem (1995) proposed that shared values would give rise to greater cohesiveness and agreement about strategic issues and perceptions of the environment. The implication for brand management is that shared values among brand team members should facilitate congruent perceptions about the brand. Thus the following hypothesis was tested:

H5: The greater the extent of shared values among brand team members, the greater the team congruency about the brand's identity.

3.9 The effects of team congruency on team-staff congruency about the brand's identity

The clearer the brand team are about the brand's identity, the better able they should be to convey the nature of the brand to staff, who are responsible for conveying the brand to consumers. Thus, the greater the congruency between brand team members, the more consistently the brand's identity should be communicated to consumer-facing staff across the organisation. The research tested the hypothesis:

H6: The greater the congruency among brand team members about the brand's identity, the greater the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity.

3.10 The effects of team-staff communication on the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity

Poor communication has been reported to contribute to a lack of consensus between senior and junior levels (Bowman and Ambrosini, 1996). Similarly, many organisational problems have been attributed to inadequate communication of decisions by superiors to subordinates, whose job it is to implement those decisions. Greater interaction between managers and sales staff reduces the perceptual differences between them (DelVecchio, 1998). Calzon (1987) stressed the importance of communicating with staff, both to inform them about a company's vision and to find out from staff what is needed to realise that vision. It is argued that communication will be important for the brand team to impart the brand's identity to staff. As discussed previously, for organisations to harness their internal brand resources effectively, all members need to have congruent brand perceptions. Thus the research tested the hypothesis:

H7: The more frequent the communication between the brand team and consumer-facing staff, the greater the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity.

Supplementary explorations

As with communication between members of the brand team, the research also examined types of team-staff communication. Communication between the brand team and consumer-facing staff was expected to be facilitated by direct communication that enabled feedback and fostered understanding between the parties. The importance of face-to-face communication with staff for effective external brand promotion is receiving growing recognition in the trade press (e.g. Hemsley, 1998; Wilson, 1998).

Gilly and Wolfinbarger (1998) proposed that two-way communication between decision-makers and employees enhanced the congruence of their perceptions of an organisation's advertisements. Feedback also provides a means of checking how accurately communication has been understood (Robbins, 1991). Hogg, Carter and Dunne (1998) identified two-way communication as a key element in a successful internal communication programme. Calzon (1987) argued that two-way communication between management and staff was crucial for achieving a company's vision. Fisher, Maltz and Jaworksi (1997) demonstrated that two-way communication between different functions improved information use and interfunctional relationships. The importance of encouraging interaction and involving staff in delivering the brand's promise rather than just expecting them to act on information imparted through a one-way presentation is gaining recognition (e.g. Murphy, 2000).

In the context of the research, two-way communication was expected to provide a mechanism for clarifying brand communication between the brand team and consumer-facing staff, improving comprehension and mitigating the effects of any lack of congruency between their brand perceptions. Frontline staff are important sources of consumer and competitive information (Lievens and Moenaert, 2000; Bitner, Booms and Mohr, 1994), which if transmitted upwards can give rise to appropriate organisational change (Rogers and Agarwala-Rogers, 1976). Two-way communication should also enable staff to feedback information about consumers' brand perceptions to the brand team. Two-way communication was therefore expected to increase the congruency between the brand team's and consumer-facing staff's perceptions of the brand's identity. It is acknowledged, however, that it has been reported that there is little upward organisational communication in practice and top executives initiate most vertical communication (Rogers and Agarwala-Rogers, 1976). Upward communication may also be positively biased (Rogers and Agarwala-Rogers, 1976).

3.11 The effects of team-staff congruency on team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity

Schneider and Bowen (1985) reported that bank customers' perceptions were influenced by staff's perceptions. The clearer consumer-facing staff are about the brand's identity, the more consistent their representation of the brand to consumers is expected to be. Consequently, the more consumer-facing staff's perceptions of the brand's identity match those of the brand team, the more closely should staff's representation of the brand to consumers convey the brand as intended by the brand team. The research tested the hypothesis:

H8: The greater the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity, the greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity.

3.12 The effects of staff-consumer communication on team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity

Previous research has indicated that managers may influence consumer-facing staff's interactions with consumers and that consumer-facing staff's contact with consumers influences consumers' perceptions (Hartline and Ferrell, 1996). The implications for this research are that staff-consumer communication will affect the level of congruency between the brand team's and consumers' perceptions of the brand's identity. Furthermore, the greater the frequency of staff-consumer contact, the greater influence should staff have on consumers' brand perceptions. The research tested the following hypothesis:

H9: The more frequent the staff-consumer communication, the greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity.

As with team and team-staff communication, the research also examined types of staff-consumer communication. It was expected that direct communication (as opposed to indirect, text-based communication) would be more likely to increase team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity.

3.13 The effects of team-consumer communication on team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity

A brand's identity should be designed and presented to appeal to its target consumers. Piercy (1995) highlighted the importance of contact with consumers for an organisation to address consumers' needs successfully. The more contact brand team members have with consumers, the better able they should be to formulate their brand's identity to appeal to the brand's target consumers. As discussed previously (see Section 3.3.1), teams composed of members with similar characteristics are particularly susceptible to false consensus, whereby they may overestimate the prevalence of their own perspectives owing to the tendency to associate with similar others. False consensus may arise from an inaccurate mental model of a target group (Fischhoff and Johnson, 1997), i.e. faulty knowledge structures or cognitive representations used to assimilate information and predict behaviour (Paris, Salas and Cannon-Bowers, 2000). Contact with consumers should help to prevent false consensus from impairing the team's formulation of the brand's identity. Thus the research tested the hypothesis:

H10: The more frequent the brand team's communication with consumers, the greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity.

3.14 The effects of team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity on consumer-based brand performance

If the brand's identity has been successfully formulated by the brand team to appeal to consumers, then the more closely consumers' perceptions of the brand match those intended by the brand team, the better should be the consumer-based brand performance. Thus the research tested the hypothesis:

H11: The greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity, the better the consumer-based brand performance.

This corresponds to de Chernatony's H_c discussed in Section 3.2.

3.15 The effects of consumer-based brand performance on business-based brand performance

As was discussed in Section 2.8.3, many authors recommend that performance be measured in terms of both consumer-based measures and business-based (i.e. financial) measures (e.g. Eccles, 1991; Harkness, 1992; Faulkner and Bowman, 1992; Kaplan and Norton 1992; Doyle 1992; and McWilliams 1996; Atkinson, Waterhouse and Wells, 1997; de Chernatony, Dall'Olmo Riley and Harris; 1998). However, no studies on the relationship between these two categories of performance measures were found.

Since consumers must purchase a brand for a financial outcome to be realised, it was hypothesised that there should be a positive relationship between consumer-based measures of brand performance and business-based measures. However, it was recognised that business-based measures are affected by other factors than just the brand (e.g. the acquisition of another firm, the purchase of new premises), which may distort any observable relationship between consumer-based and business-based measures. Nevertheless, the hypothesis was tested:

H12: The better the consumer-based brand performance, the better the business-based brand performance.

3.16 The effects of brand team composition on brand management

3.16.1 Overview

The focus of the research was testing the conceptual model and the hypotheses relating to the links in the model. However, owing to the lack of empirical research on intervening variables in the literature and because the research enabled additional quantitative analysis to be conducted, potential direct effects between some of the key variables in the model were also explored. The literature has tended to concentrate on the effects of team composition on consensus (comparable to team congruency about the brand's identity in the research) and performance. Pfeffer (1983) proposed that direct effects between top management team composition and organisational performance would still occur because it would not be possible to include all possible intervening process variables. Thus, while the relationship between brand team composition and performance is expected to be mediated by communication and shared values, direct effects were also examined. This facilitated comparison with the literature and enabled the impact of including the mediating variables in the conceptual model to be assessed.

As already mentioned, brand management performance was assessed at five levels: (i) the formulation of the brand (the congruency of brand team members' perceptions about their brand's identity); (ii) the internal implementation of the brand's identity (the congruency between the brand team and consumer-facing staff about the brand's identity) (iii) the external implementation of the brand's identity (the congruency between the brand team and consumers about the brand's identity); (iv) consumer-based brand performance; and (v) business-based brand performance. However, the exploration of potential direct effects of brand team composition (i.e. diversity in brand team characteristics, mean brand team tenure, mean brand team age and brand team size) focused on just two aspects of brand management: the formulation of the brand (the brand team congruency about the brand's identity) and consumer-based brand performance. The formulation of the brand's identity by the brand team is the starting point of brand management, from which the subsequent internal and external implementation of the brand's identity originate. Consumer-based brand performance is an outcome measure and may be considered the most objective measure of brand management performance (i.e. not necessarily dependent on the validity of the conceptual model) and less likely to be affected by non-brand related factors than business-based measures of brand performance. The direct effects explored are shown in Figure 2.

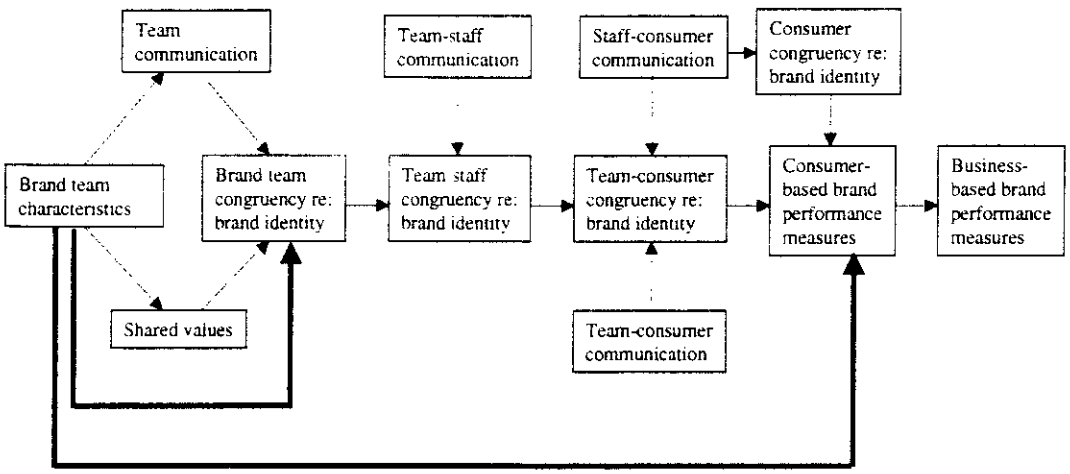

Figure 2. Direct effects explored

The implications from the diversity literature were that brand teams with similar characteristics were more likely to demonstrate greater congruency about the brand formulation (i.e. team congruency about the brand's identity). However, if diverse teams were able to overcome difficulties in communication and differences in values, they might be able to benefit from their diversity and be more likely to achieve better ultimate brand performance (i.e. consumer-based brand performance). Walsh, Henderson and Deighton (1988) hypothesised that decision-making groups with high diversity in their knowledge structures should perform better than groups composed of members with more similar knowledge structures in complex decision environments, although their findings did not support this hypothesis.

If diverse teams are able to overcome difficulties in communication and differences in values, then associations between team diversity and performance may occur that may not be captured by the mediating variables in the model. For example, Chatman, Polzer, Barsade and Neale (1998) found that the benefits of demographic diversity such as creativity were more likely to be realised in organisations that emphasised common interests rather than individualism. Simons, Pelled and Smith (1999) argued that appropriate processes must be present for the potential benefits of team diversity to be realised. They found that debate increased the tendency for diversity, particularly job-related forms of diversity such as function, education and company tenure, to enhance top management team performance.

The following subsections explore the implications from the literature on potential direct effects of the various team composition variables on team congruency about the brand's identity and consumer-based brand performance.

3.16.2 The effects of diversity in brand team members' characteristics on team congruency about the brand's identity

The literature indicates that teams whose members have similar characteristics demonstrate better group processes (e.g. Wagner, Pfeffer and O'Reilly, 1984; Harrison, Price and Bell, 1998) and tend to exhibit greater consensus (e.g. Bettenhausen, 1991; Klimoski and Mohammed, 1994; Knight et al., 1999). Thus irrespective of the quality of their formulation of the brand's identity, the implications from the literature are that the more similar a brand team's characteristics, the greater should be the congruency of brand team members' perceptions about the brand's identity.

3.16.3 The effects of diversity in brand team members' characteristics on consumer-based brand performance

Team diversity is beneficial for tasks involving complex problem solving and may increase innovation (Bantel and Jackson, 1989). Although mixed gender groups may exhibit lower integration and satisfaction, there is evidence that mixed gender groups are more creative (Schruijer and Mostert, 1997; Hoffman and Maier, 1961). It has been suggested that age diversity is positively associated with creativity owing to the wider range of information and perspectives available to the group (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998). Diverse groups are also more responsive to change (Murray, 1997), which in an industry like financial services undergoing substantial change suggests that diversity might have a direct positive impact on performance. While diverse teams are less able to reach a consensus (Bettenhausen, 1991), it has been suggested that healthy conflict may be beneficial (Eisenhardt, Kahwajy and Bourgeois, 1997). Eisenhardt, Kahwajy and Bourgeois (1997) reported that teams which experienced conflict, but not *interpersonal* conflict, used more information, focused on facts, generated multiple alternatives for debate, shared goals, used humour, and created fairness through a balanced power structure and resolution of issues without enforced consensus. Similarly, Jehn (1995) reported that disagreements about tasks (as opposed to interpersonal conflict) were beneficial in groups performing non-routine tasks. As with heterogeneity, there is likely to be an optimal level of conflict, above or below which performance declines (Jehn, 1995). However, Jehn (1995) noted that task-related disagreements could reduce members' satisfaction and cause them to wish to leave the group, despite the positive impact of such disagreement on performance.

By contrast, group similarity in interpreting and classifying information may inhibit tasks requiring decision-making, judgement and creativity (Goodman, Ravlin and Argote, 1986). Demographic similarity may limit creativity owing to similarity in ideas (Chatman, Polzer, Barsade and Neale, 1998). In addition, groups with similar characteristics can be less open to information owing to greater conformity (Wiersema and Bantel, 1992). The implications are that similar brand teams are more likely to have congruent brand perceptions, but diverse brand teams are more likely to formulate a brand identity that draws on a wider range of skills and information and so might be more appealing to consumers and ultimately result in better consumer-based brand performance.

Williams and O'Reilly (1998) concluded that the effect of diversity on performance would be U-shaped: some degree of diversity would improve performance, but large degrees of diversity would impair performance. Wiersema and Bantel (1992) also argued that the benefits of diversity decrease as diversity increases and that very high levels of diversity may have a negative impact on performance. The research therefore also examined the possibility that the relationship between brand team diversity and consumer-based brand performance might be curvilinear.

3.16.4 The effects of mean brand team tenure on team congruency about the brand's identity

Although brand teams with similar characteristics are expected to have more congruent perceptions of their brand's identity, the length of time members work together weakens the effects of surface-level (demographic) diversity (Harrison, Price and Bell, 1998). Jackson (1992) argued that since group members' attitudes become more similar over time, longer-tenured groups were particularly likely to demonstrate attitude similarity. There is also some evidence that diverse groups' processes improve over time. Watson, Kumar and Michaelson (1993) reported improved group processes in culturally diverse groups of undergraduate students in a laboratory study conducted over a period of four months. It was therefore expected that longer mean team tenure would be associated with greater team congruency about the brand's identity.

3.16.5 The effects of mean brand team tenure on consumer-based brand performance

Williams and O'Reilly (1998) reported that tenure and functional diversity, and to a lesser extent educational diversity, were linked to better performance, in spite of poorer communication. However, increasing team tenure may impair team performance owing to reduced receptiveness to new information resulting from a preoccupation with maintaining relationships and routines (Katz, 1982). Similarly, Hambrick and Mason (1984) proposed that the restricted knowledge base of managers with a long tenure impaired their capacity to respond to environmental changes. This implies that while long team tenure might increase the congruency of the brand team's brand perceptions, it might also mean that the team's formulation of the brand's identity is less adaptive to consumers' changing needs. To compare the research data with the literature, the potential relationship between mean brand team tenure and team congruency about the brand's identity was explored. It was expected that longer mean team tenure would be associated with poorer consumer-based brand performance.

Unfamiliar teams may also be more susceptible to groupthink because members are less secure about their roles and group norms (Leana, 1985). This suggests that as with team diversity, the relationship between team tenure and performance may be curvilinear; longer team tenure might be beneficial through its positive effects on team processes, but after a certain point performance may decline with further increases in team tenure as the team becomes less adaptive owing to its restricted knowledge base. Indeed, Pfeffer (1983) suggested that there is a curvilinear relationship between mean tenure and performance. Katz (1982) also reported that the relationship between team tenure and performance was curvilinear, with performance peaking at between two and four years. Thus the possibility that there might be a curvilinear relationship between mean team tenure and brand performance was also examined.

3.16.6 The effects of mean brand team age on team congruency about the brand's identity and consumer-based brand performance

Goodyear (1996) proposed that a younger team from middle management was more likely to appreciate the need for brand marketing and put corporate survival before a personal sense of control than would an older generation whose views had been shaped by the time when it was a seller's market (Stage 1 of Goodyear's brand evolutionary spectrum – see Section 2.5). Conversely, research has shown that long tenure is associated with adherence to the status quo (Alutto and Hrebiniak, 1975; Stevens, Beyer and Trice, 1978). This may be particularly evident in financial services, in which branding is still a comparatively recent development. This suggests that younger brand teams may be more aware of the need to create a distinctive brand identity. Thus it was expected that the younger the mean brand team age, the greater would be the team congruency about the brand's identity. Younger mean brand team age was also expected to be associated with better consumer-based brand performance.

3.16.7 The effects of brand team size on team congruency about the brand's identity

The effects of brand team size on performance were also investigated. Empirical evidence suggests that larger team size tends to diminish effectiveness (Paris, Salas and Cannon-Bowers, 2000). However the impact of larger team size on brand management performance is difficult to predict. Smaller teams tend to be more cohesive (Thomas and Fink, 1963). So larger teams should be less inclined to false consensus and groupthink. Greater diversity should also generate a wider range of skills, knowledge and perspectives. However, Iaquinto and Fredrickson, 1997) reported that top management team size was inversely related to team agreement about the comprehensiveness of the strategic decision process. In addition, LePine and Van Dyne (1998) argued that as group size increases, conformity pressures reduce the likelihood that members will express challenging ideas or propose change. The implication is that larger brand teams may be unlikely to surface and resolve differing brand perceptions. It was therefore expected that larger brand teams would have less congruent perceptions about the brand's identity.

3.16.8 The effects of brand team size on consumer-based brand performance

Haleblian and Finkelstein (1993) found that large top management teams performed better in a turbulent environment. Given the turbulence in the financial services industry, it is possible that larger brand management teams might ultimately perform better. Thus it was expected that larger brand teams would be associated with better consumer-based brand performance.

3.17 Chapter summary

This chapter has described the conceptual model tested in the research. Drawing on the top management team, strategic consensus, group and social psychology literature, it has examined the factors hypothesised to affect brand management performance and identified the associated hypotheses. It has also considered the potential effects of other team composition variables and the implications of these for aspects of brand management performance.

3.18 Summary of hypotheses

H1: The greater the diversity in team characteristics, the less frequent the team communication.

H2: The greater the diversity in team characteristics, the lower the extent of shared values.

H3: The greater the extent of shared values among brand team members, the more frequent the team communication.

H4: The more frequent the brand team communication, the greater the team congruency about the brand's identity.

H5: The greater the extent of shared values among brand team members, the greater the team congruency about the brand's identity.

H6: The greater the congruency among brand team members about the brand's identity, the greater the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity.

H7: The more frequent the communication between the brand team and consumer-facing staff, the greater the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity.

H8: The greater the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity, the greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity.

H9: The more frequent the staff-consumer communication, the greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity.

H10: The more frequent the brand team's communication with consumers, the greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity.

H11: The greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity, the better the consumer-based brand performance.

H12: The better the consumer-based brand performance, the better the business-based brand performance.

In addition to the hypotheses specified above, a series of supplementary explorations were conducted. These essentially investigated relationships associated with the conceptual model in finer detail.

CHAPTER 4 RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research design. It opens with an overview of the methodology used and an explanation of how the three stakeholder studies relate to different sections of the conceptual model. The selection of the financial services sector for study is explained. The development of the questionnaires is then described, the measures used in the research detailed and their choice justified. The research design is then described in greater detail, including the recruitment of companies for participation, initial interviews with brand contacts in the companies and the three studies conducted with different stakeholder groups. The chapter concludes with an explanation regarding the structuring of the subsequent results chapters.

4.2 Overview of the methodology

A conceptual model, grounded in the literature, was developed, which built upon de Chernatony's (1994) core hypotheses to explain the relationships between a number of variables hypothesised to affect brand performance. Associated hypotheses were formulated. The conceptual model and hypotheses were tested in a series of three studies with three different stakeholder groups: (i) members of the team responsible for managing the financial services brand; (ii) consumer-facing staff responsible for representing the brand to consumers; and (iii) consumers of the brand. Each study related to a different section of the conceptual model, as illustrated in Figure 3.

Initial interviews were conducted with the key brand contact in each organisation, followed by the collection of primarily quantitative data from the three different stakeholder groups using postal questionnaires. This approach enabled comparable quantitative data to be collected from large numbers of geographically dispersed target respondents, from which corporate brand level data were derived to test the research hypotheses. Other researchers have used a similar methodology, interviewing CEOs to gather information and identify appropriate managers to whom postal questionnaires were subsequently sent (e.g. Bourgeois, 1980; 1985; Glick, Miller and Huber, 1993; Wooldridge and Floyd, 1990). Postal questionnaires are also the most frequently used method in diversity research (e.g. Simons, Pelled and Smith, 1999; Tsui and O'Reilly, 1989; Chattopadhyay, Glick, Miller and Huber, 1999).

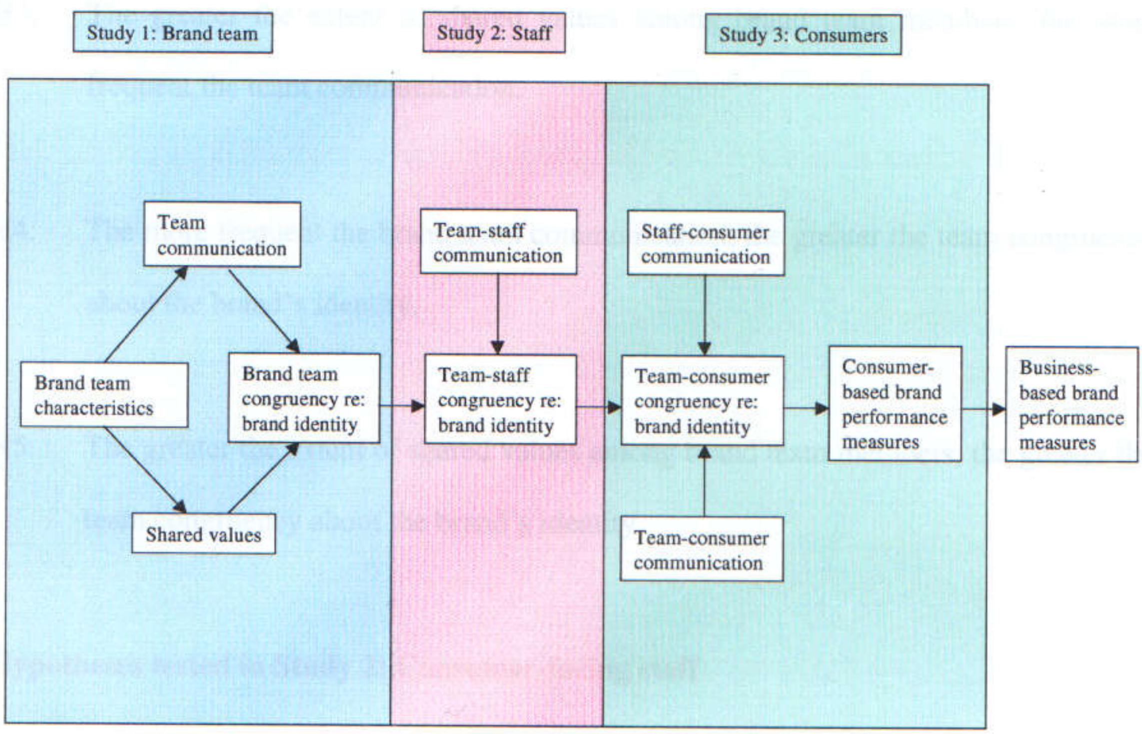

Figure 3. Diagram showing the sections of the conceptual model addressed in the three stakeholder studies

The hypotheses tested in each study are listed below. The hypotheses relating to sections of the conceptual model are shown in the colour corresponding to the relevant study from Figure 3.

Hypotheses tested in Study 1: Brand team

H1: The greater the diversity in team characteristics, the less frequent the team communication.

H2: The greater the diversity in team characteristics, the lower the extent of shared values.

H3: The greater the extent of shared values among brand team members, the more frequent the team communication.

H4: The more frequent the brand team communication, the greater the team congruency about the brand's identity.

H5: The greater the extent of shared values among brand team members, the greater the team congruency about the brand's identity.

Hypotheses tested in Study 2: Consumer-facing staff

H6: The greater the congruency among brand team members about the brand's identity, the greater the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity.

H7: The more frequent the communication between the brand team and consumer-facing staff, the greater the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity.

Hypotheses tested in Study 3: Consumers

H8: The greater the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity, the greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity.

H9: The more frequent the staff-consumer communication, the greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity.

H10: The more frequent the brand team's communication with consumers, the greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity.

H11: The greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity, the better the consumer-based brand performance.

H12: The better the consumer-based brand performance, the better the business-based brand performance.

4.3 The selection of the financial services sector for investigation

The research was conducted in the financial services sector. As discussed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.10), branding is becoming increasingly important in financial services in the current era of intense competition, with brands expanding into new product areas and heightened competition from new entrants with established retail brands following deregulation. It was therefore expected that the creation and implementation of a brand's identity would play a vital role in differentiating a financial services brand from its competitors.

4.4 Development of the questionnaires

Wherever possible existing, validated instruments were used or adapted for use in the research. However, for a number of concepts questions had to be developed. The latter were refined through piloting and discussion with customer research managers in the participating companies. The questionnaires were tailored to each of the brands by adding its brand values, brand personality and relationship characteristics, where appropriate, to the generic list of items if they were not already included as items in these lists.

4.4.1 Demographic data

The demographic data commonly collected in the team-based and consensus literature include: age, gender, length of team, company and industry tenure, team size, education and functional background (e.g. Glick, Miller and Huber, 1993; Smith, Smith, Olian, Sims, O'Bannon and Scully, 1994; Korac-Kakabadse, Korac-Kakabadse and Myers, 1998; Knight, Pearce, Smith, Olian, Sims, Smith and Flood, 1999).

The following brand team demographic data were collected from individuals in the brand team questionnaire (see Appendix 1):

- Age (Question 42);
- Length of brand team tenure (Question 34);
- Length of company tenure (Question 35);

- Length of industry tenure (Question 36);
- Function (current function/department) (Question 37);
- Functional background (function/department in which spent most of career) (Question 38);
- Educational qualifications (Question 39).

These data were then used to derive the following team level data:

- Age – expressed as a decimal of years and months (mean and standard deviation);
- Length of brand team tenure – expressed as a decimal of years and months (mean and standard deviation);
- Length of company tenure – expressed as a decimal of years and months (mean and standard deviation);
- Length of industry tenure – expressed as a decimal of years and months (mean and standard deviation);
- Function (current function/department) (Blau's Index);
- Functional background (function/department in which spent most of career) (Blau's index);
- Educational qualifications (Blau's Index).

The following brand team level data were obtained from the list of brand team members supplied by the companies to examine additional team diversity variables:

- Gender (Blau's Index and percentage of males);
- Internal vs. external membership (Blau's Index and percentage of external members);
- Geographical dispersion (Blau's Index - calculated from the number of sites at which team members were based and the number of team members based at each site).

Blau's (1977) Index of Heterogeneity provides a measure of the dispersion of group members among categories. The formula is:

$$\text{Blau's Index} = (1 - \sum p_i^2)$$

where p_i is the fraction of the population in each group. Blau's Index has been used to measure various types of diversity in research (e.g. diversity in function, educational level and major field of study for highest degree earned by Bantel and Jackson, 1989; functional diversity by Haleblian and Finkelstein, 1993 and Knight et al., 1999; diversity in gender and education by West and Schwenk, 1996; functional background diversity by Simons, Pelled and Smith, 1999; diversity in educational specialisation by Wiersema and Bantel, 1992). However, Blau's Index does not provide any indication of the nature of the diversity (e.g. groups with twice as many males as females would produce the same Blau's Index as a group with twice as many females as males). So the percentage of members in a particular category was also examined for dichotomous variables (gender and internal vs. external membership). This approach is consistent with that advocated by Pfeffer (1983), who argued that multiple measures were required to capture distributional properties.

Current function and functional background data were collected using a checklist of functions/departments (Questions 37 and 38 in the Brand Team Questionnaire – see Appendix 1). Respondents were asked to tick those that applied. An 'other' category was provided so that respondents could specify any function/department in which they currently or previously worked that might not have been included in the checklist. Respondents' answers in the 'other function(s)/department(s)' category were included in the analyses of the lists of current and background functions/departments. The number of team members in each category of function/department was counted and a Blau's Index calculated for each brand team.

Educational qualifications data were collected using a checklist of qualifications (Question 39 in the Brand Team Questionnaire – see Appendix 1). As for function data, an 'other' category was provided. Diversity in educational qualifications was calculated by taking the highest educational qualification obtained by each brand team member (consistent with previous research e.g. Simons, Pelled and Smith, 1999) and computing a Blau's Index for each team.

An overall summary measure of brand team demographic diversity was calculated by:

1. Standardising the diversity variables measured using standard deviations (by dividing each brand mean for a variable by the maximum standard deviation value across the brands)
2. Summing the diversity variables measured using Blau's Index (gender diversity, functional diversity, functional background diversity, education diversity, internal vs. external membership diversity and geographical dispersion diversity) and the standardised variables calculated in 1. above (standard deviation of age, standard deviation of team tenure, standard deviation of company tenure and standard deviation of industry tenure).

This approach is consistent with that used by West and Schwenk (1996).

4.4.2 Brand identity

Data on the three stakeholder groups' perceptions of the brand's identity were collected for each organisation in order to calculate the congruency of brand perceptions among brand team members and between the brand team and the other two stakeholder groups: consumer-facing staff and consumers.

As described in Chapter 2 (Section 2.7), de Chernatony's model of brand identity consists of six components: brand vision (encompassing the brand's purpose, values and envisioned future), corporate culture, brand positioning, brand personality, relationships and brand presentation. The last of these, brand presentation, was examined in the context of the larger project within which this research was conducted, but was not analysed for the purposes of this thesis. The way in which each of the six components was operationalised is detailed in the following subsections and the reasons for omitting the sixth component explained in turn. The calculation of the congruency of brand perceptions within and between stakeholder groups is then explained in Section 4.4.3.

Brand vision: (i) purpose

Open-ended questions were developed to examine the brand's purpose and its subsidiary, the brand's goal, in the brand team questionnaire (Questions 2 and 3 in Appendix 1). Staff and consumers were not expected to have the same level of brand knowledge as brand team members, so the brand teams' responses were analysed to derive statements for the brand's purpose and goal. The statements were approved by the brand contact in each company (as reported in Section 4.8) and then incorporated into the staff and consumer questionnaires with 5-points scales and verbal anchors of "strongly disagree" and "strongly agree".

Brand vision: (ii) brand values

Brand team members' perceptions of their brand's core values were examined using an open-ended question (Question 1 in Appendix 1). However, to examine brand values as a whole (including both core and peripheral values) and the congruency of perceptions within and between stakeholder groups, a scalar instrument to measure brand values was required. No instrument for measuring values with regard to brands had been developed, so instruments for measuring organisational and personal values were explored.

Finegan and Theriault (1997) reviewed four standard measures of values used in the organisational behaviour literature. They concluded that Ravlin and Meglino's Comparative Emphasis Scale and Chatman's Organisational Culture Profile were ipsative (ranked), which restricted data analysis. England's Personal Value Questionnaire contained overlapping categories, was difficult to complete and included a number of items that were arguably not values. Rokeach's Value Survey was found to have well established reliability and validity in measuring personal values, but did not include a number of values important to the business community. Furthermore, Rokeach's list of values contained a number of items that would be inappropriate for organisational research (McDonald and Gandz, 1991).

Instead, Finegan and Theriault (1997) chose to use an adaptation of McDonald and Gandz's (1991) Value Taxonomy hierarchy of 24 values to examine the relationship between employees' personal values and their perceptions of their company's code of ethics and the organisation's true operating values. McDonald and Gandz (1991) noted that their list of values could be used with either ratings or rankings. Finegan (2000) reported that the test-retest reliability of the list of values was .76 and the inter-rater reliability .77 for the rank-order instrument. To avoid violating the statistical assumption of independence by ranking the values (as required by both Rokeach's and McDonald and Gandz's scales), Finegan and Theriault (1997) and Finegan (2000) used ratings made on 7-point scales, with anchors of 'not very important' to 'very important'. The internal consistency of the scales and the convergent validity for individual-organisation value congruency were reported to be satisfactory (McDonald, 1993).

McDonald and Gandz's (1991) list of values was specifically developed to enable comparisons between personal values and organisational values in terms of shared values and the values were designed to have the same meaning and relevance to both individuals and organisations. This instrument was therefore considered to be the most appropriate for examining a corporate brand's values in the research. The list of values is provided in Appendix 2. Furthermore, McDonald and Gandz's list of values resemble value taxonomies developed by other researchers (e.g. Cooke and Rousseau, 1988; Dobni, Ritchie and Zerbe, 2000) To maintain consistency with other questionnaire items, 5-point rating scales were used. The list of values was supplemented for each individual company by the brand's values identified from the brand documents supplied by the company as part of the tailoring of the questionnaires to each brand.

The strengths and weaknesses of this normative approach (rating values independently on scales) as opposed to ipsative approach (rank ordering values) to measuring values were considered. Meglino and Ravlin (1998) discussed the relative merits and limitations of measuring 'espoused' values with the normative approach and 'in-use' values with the ipsative approach. They noted that ipsative scores were considered to be closer to an individual's true values and less prone to social desirability bias, but did not allow absolute differences to be captured and did not lend themselves to sophisticated statistical analysis. By contrast, normative value ratings enabled absolute differences to be captured (and allowed values to be rated as of equal strength) and more sophisticated statistical analyses to be performed, but were more prone to social desirability bias. However, Meglino and Ravlin (1998) suggested that the normative value ratings were more appropriate in examining the congruence between individuals' assessments of particular entities (e.g. an organisation). Hence a normative approach was used in the research.

Brand vision: (iii) envisioned future

Brand team members' perceptions of their brand's envisioned future and the role the brand needed to play to achieve its envisioned future were examined using open-ended questions (Questions 4 and 5 in Appendix 1). As the other stakeholder groups were not expected to have the same level of knowledge about the brand, brand team members' responses to these questions were content analysed to derive statements about the brand's envisioned future and its role to achieve its envisioned future. These statements were approved by the organisation and then incorporated into the staff and consumer questionnaires as 5-point scales with verbal anchors of "strongly disagree" and "strongly agree".

Corporate culture

One of the most influential models of organisational culture was proposed by Schein (1984), who posited three levels of corporate culture: artefacts, values and basic assumptions. Schein (1996) advocated an ethnographic approach to examining corporate culture. Schein (1984) suggested that the unconscious level of organisational culture, basic assumptions, could only be accessed through the kind of focused inquiry used by anthropologists. The richness of data obtained in this way undoubtedly yields a much more insightful understanding of a corporation's culture. However, rigorous ethnographic research requires immersion in an organisation for as long as a year. While Deshpande and Webster (1989) recommended a combination of ethnographic and survey research methods, the use of both approaches was beyond the scope of the research, especially given that corporate culture was only one component of study.

Although organisational culture has traditionally been examined using qualitative approaches, many quantitative instruments for measuring organisational culture have been developed. In selecting an instrument to assess the corporate culture component of brand identity, the reliability, validity, dimensions, development and administration issues were considered.

The Organisational Culture Survey (Glaser, 1983; 1987) was developed using very small samples of firms: originally just one firm and later two firms and 29 firms (but with only 52 respondents across these 29 firms). Furthermore, many of the items are not organisation-wide in their focus; seven of the 31 items relate specifically to the respondent's supervisor, who may not be representative of the organisation as a whole.

The Organisational Culture Profile (O'Reilly, Chatman and Caldwell, 1991) involves a Q-sort administration, which was not feasible in the research, given the use of postal questionnaires. In addition, the Organisational Culture Profile and a short version of it, the Person-Organisation Value Congruence (Billsberry, 1997), address the fit between an organisation and its employees, whereas the research focus was the corporate brand.

Xenikou and Furnham's (1996) comparison of the Organisational Culture Inventory (OCI) (Cooke and Lafferty, 1989), the Culture Gap Survey (Kilman and Saxton, 1983), the Organisational Beliefs Questionnaire (Sashkin, 1984) and the Corporate Culture Survey (Glaser, 1983; Glaser, Zamanou and Hacker, 1987) suggested that Cooke and Lafferty's OCI (based on behavioural norms) was the most reliable and valid instrument. Furthermore, Cooke and Szumal (1993) reported that the OCI is widely used in many countries, including the UK. However, the OCI has 120 items, making it prohibitively long to include alongside a questionnaire that already involved collecting a large amount of data on many other variables.

The larger research project, of which this research was a part, involved investigating the effects of value congruency between brand values, corporate values and personal values on brand performance. Using the same list of values to assess brand values, corporate values and personal values enabled value congruency to be calculated. As already discussed, McDonald and Gandz's (1991) list of values was specifically developed to enable comparisons between personal values and corporate values, and the values in the list were designed to have the same meaning and relevance to both individuals and organisations. As previously noted, values are one of Schein's (1984) three levels of organisational culture. McDonald and Gandz (1991) observed: "*at the organisational level, values have been conceptualised as the most practical and measurable element in the phenomenon of organisational culture*" (p.219). It was therefore decided to use McDonald and Gandz's list of values to assess corporate values in the research.

Brand positioning

Brand team members' perceptions of their brand's positioning were examined using an open-ended question (Question 6 in Appendix 1). As the other stakeholder groups were not expected to have the same level of knowledge about the brand, brand team members' responses to the brand team questionnaire were content analysed to derive a statement about the brand's positioning. This statement was approved by the organisation and then incorporated into the staff and consumer questionnaires as a 5-point scale with verbal anchors of "strongly disagree" and "strongly agree".

Brand personality

Brand personality is "*the set of human characteristics associated with a brand*" (Aaker, 1997, p.347). Brand personality was measured using two approaches: (i) an open-ended question asking how brand team members would describe the brand's personality (de Chernatony) in the brand team questionnaire (Question 7 in Appendix 1); and (ii) Aaker's Brand Personality Scale in all three stakeholder questionnaires. Aaker's (1997) Brand Personality Scale (42-items) is comprised of five dimensions (sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness) and is reported to be reliable, valid and generalisable (Aaker, 1997). To keep the time to complete the questionnaire to an acceptable length only the 15 facets (the sub-factors derived from factor analysing each of the five factors in the 42-item scale) were used (see Appendix 3). This approach was also used by Mäder, Huber and Herrmann (2000).

Relationships

Iacobucci and Ostrom's (1996) instrument was used to examine inter- and intra-stakeholder group relationships in the overall research programme, within which this research was embedded. This was the only instrument found in the literature for measuring individual-to-individual and individual-to-firm relationships. The instrument's 18 items (see Appendix 4) were based on 14 items from Wish's (1976) relational variables and four additional items that Iacobucci and Ostrom included to address longer-term serial contacts identified as important in the marketing literature (Iacobucci and Ostrom, 1996). These additional items ('long term', 'requiring a lot of trust', 'high risk/uncertainty' and 'the history of the relationship is important to its continuing') are of particular relevance to financial services owing to the long-term nature of the relationship between a financial services provider and its consumers and the level of risk and trust involved in the purchase of financial services.

The research focused on a subset of relationships: (i) the relationship between brand team members; (ii) the relationship between the brand team and consumer-facing staff; and (iii) the relationship between consumer-facing staff and consumers.

Presentation

To examine the 'presentation' component of de Chernatony's (1999) Brand Identity Model open-ended questions were used to examine the brand's personality characteristics that consumers could use to convey their ideal and actual self-concepts to others (Questions 13 and 14 in the brand team questionnaire, Questions 7 and 8 in the staff questionnaire and Questions 15 and 17 in the consumer questionnaire).

However these data did not indicate whether the presentation of the brand's identity concurred with consumers' self-image. Most studies of self-concept have developed tailored lists of bipolar adjectives from advertising and published research sources (e.g. Birdwell, 1968; de Chernatony and Benicio de Mello, 1995; Dolich, 1969; Grubb and Hupp, 1968; Ross, 1971). By contrast, Belch and Landon (1977) measured self-concept using two 5-point scales with the following pairs of anchors: (i) 'Very much unlike me' – 'Very much like me' and (ii) 'Very much unlike how I want to be' – 'Very much like how I want to be'. Belch and Landon concluded that social desirability and product ownership significantly affected the self-concept ratings and order bias might occur. Nevertheless, they found the self-concept ratings to have predictive validity with regard to consumer purchase behaviour.

Both Belch and Landon's (1977) and Grubb and Hupp's (1968) approaches to measuring consumer's self-concept were employed (Questions 14 and 16 and Questions 18 and 19 respectively in the consumer questionnaire in Appendix 5). For the latter, the unique emotional characteristics (brand personality) identified by the brand team (from Questions 13 and 14 of the brand team questionnaire in Appendix 1) were used as trait items against which consumers were asked to indicate each trait's degree of applicability to firstly their ideal self-concept and secondly their actual self-concept. Ross (1971) suggested that this order of presentation would minimise the social desirability response set of consumers in describing their actual self-concept. However, instead of using a 4-point scale as in Grubb and Hupp (1968), to maintain consistency with other questionnaire items 5-point scales were used.

The first approach was designed to indicate the extent to which each brand's *perceived* personality matched consumers' ideal and actual self-concepts. The second approach was used to indicate the extent to which the *intended* brand personality (as conceived by the brand team) matched consumers' ideal and actual self-concepts.

Although these data were collected for use in the wider research project within which the research reported was embedded, they were not analysed for the purpose of this thesis. The data did not lend themselves to the calculation of congruency scores between the different stakeholder groups' perceptions of the brand's personality characteristics that reflected consumers' ideal and actual self-concepts.

4.4.3 Calculation of congruency in stakeholders' perceptions of brand identity components

Brand team congruency

The congruency among brand team members regarding each of the brand identity components addressed by open-ended questions (purpose, goal, envisioned future, role to achieve the envisioned future and positioning) was assessed by:

(i) content analysing respondents' answers to each open-ended question,

(ii) counting the total number of themes mentioned across all brand team members and the number of brand team members mentioning each theme, and

(iii) calculating the mean frequency with which the themes were mentioned by brand team members (i.e. the total number of theme occurrences (the sum of each theme multiplied by the frequency with which it was mentioned) divided by the number of themes).

Hence, larger values corresponded to greater congruency among brand team members about these brand identity components.

Team congruency about the brand identity components addressed by scale items (brand/organisational/personal values, brand personality and relationships) was calculated for each brand team by:

(i) taking the standard deviation for each scale item,

(ii) squaring it,

(iii) summing across the squared standard deviations of the scale items.

(iv) taking the mean (dividing by the number of scale items[1])

(v) and finally taking the square root of the overall mean.

Hence, smaller values corresponded to greater congruency among brand team members about these brand identity components.

Checks were conducted to ensure that the measures of team congruency were not biased by either the full brand team size or the obtained sample brand team size (i.e. that larger brand teams did not result in lower team congruency scores simply as a result of having more members). Correlations were performed between the team congruency scores for the brand identity components and the full and obtained sample brand team sizes. Significant correlations were obtained for only a minority of brand identity components (core values, brand personality (the open-ended question) and the team-staff relationship), all of which indicated that larger brand teams in fact had more congruent brand perceptions. Brand team size per se was therefore not considered to bias the team congruency measures (i.e. larger brand teams were not disadvantaged in their degree of congruency as a result of their size).

Team-staff/team-consumer congruency

The congruency between the brand team's perceptions and other stakeholders' perceptions about each of the identity components assessed using open-ended questions (purpose, goal, envisioned future, role to achieve the brand's envisioned future and positioning) was evaluated by the mean rating on the 5-point scale, indicating a stakeholder group's level of agreement with the brand team's statement about these five brand identity components.

[1] The number of value, brand personality and relationship items differed between brands because each brand's specific characteristics were added to the generic list if not already included in the generic list.

Hence larger values corresponded to greater congruency between the brand team and other stakeholder groups about these five brand identity components (purpose, goal, envisioned future, role to achieve the envisioned future and positioning).

The congruency between the brand team and other stakeholder groups about each of the scalar brand identity components (brand/organisational values, brand personality and relationships) was calculated by:

(i) taking the absolute difference score using the stakeholder means for each scale item,

(ii) squaring it

(iii) summing across the squared difference scores of the scale items,

(iv) taking the mean (dividing by the number of scale items)

(v) and finally taking the square root of the overall mean.

This approach is similar to that used by Jauch, Osborn and Terpening (1980) to calculate congruency. The scores were squared before summing on the advice of a statistician, because it makes the calculation much closer to other indices used to measure variability (e.g. the standard deviation, mean squared error) (Karen Vines, personal communication).

For these brand identity components assessed using scales, small congruency values corresponded to greater congruency between the brand team and other stakeholder groups.

Summary measures of congruency about a brand's identity

A summary measure of team congruency about a brand's identity was calculated by:

1. standardising each brand identity component variable separately by subtracting the overall mean of the 12 brand teams from each brand team's mean and then dividing each by the standard deviation of the 12 brand team means:

$$\text{i.e.} \quad \frac{x_1 - \overline{x}}{s_x}, \quad \frac{x_2 - \overline{x}}{s_x}, \quad \ldots \quad \frac{x_{12} - \overline{x}}{s_x}$$

   where x_1 is the mean for brand team number one, x is the mean of all the 12 brand teams and s_x is the standard deviation of all the 12 brand team means.

2. Summing the standardised brand team scores across the brand identity component variables (core values, purpose, goal, envisioned future, role to achieve the brand's envisioned future, positioning, brand personality (scale), brand values, organisational values, brand team relationship, team-staff relationship and ideal staff-consumer relationship).

This approach is consistent with that used by West and Schwenk (1996) to derive a summary measure of demographic diversity and Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) to derive single indicator constructs for path analysis.

A summary measure of congruency about a brand's identity was also calculated for team-staff congruency and for team-consumer congruency. These were calculated as described above, except that only those brand identity component variables that were assessed across all three stakeholder groups were used to form the summary measure (staff's/consumers' mean agreement with the brand identity components: 'purpose', 'goal', 'envisioned future', 'role to achieve the brand's envisioned future', 'positioning'; and the absolute difference score of the mean brand team and mean staff/consumer ratings for each scale item, squared, summed across items, meaned and square rooted for the identity components: 'brand personality' (scale), 'brand values' and 'the staff-consumer relationship'). A second comparable summary measure of this subset of brand identity component variables was also calculated for the brand teams so that a path analysis could be conducted between the three stakeholder groups' summary congruency scores. As there were only ten organisations that provided data across all three stakeholder groups, the means and standard deviations across the organisations used to standardise the brand identity component variables were those for the ten brands with full sets of data (i.e. the two organisations which participated in only the first or first and second studies were not included in these summary measures, as the intention was to use these summary measures in path analyses across the three stakeholder groups).

4.4.4 Communication

Dubrin (1994) defined communication as follows:

> *"Communication is the sending, receiving and understanding of messages. It is also the basic process by which managers and professionals accomplish their work. The purpose of communication is to gather, process and disseminate information."* (p.336)

Communication between the brand team was examined using an adaptation of Smith et al.'s (1994) questions (see Appendix 6). Communication between the brand team and sales/service staff was examined using the same questions, rephrased as appropriate (excluding Question 6 in Appendix 6).

Different communication modalities may impact differentially on team processes, decision-making and co-ordination (Paris, Salas and Cannon-Bowers, 2000). Group activity involves both formal and informal systems, which are considered complementary (Rogers and Agarwala, 1976). So data were collected for a range of communication modalities: formal face-to-face meetings; informal face-to-face meetings; formal written communication (e.g. letters, memos); informal written communication (e.g. personal notes); formal e-mail; informal e-mail; formal faxes; informal faxes; and telephone communication. The frequency of communication was examined by taking an overall mean of the mean frequency of each type of communication across respondents. Consistent with Glick, Miller and Huber's (1993) categorisation of media richness, the frequency of direct communication was examined by calculating the mean of formal face-to-face meetings, informal face-to-face meetings and telephone communication and the frequency of indirect, text-based communication was examined by calculating the mean of formal written communication (e.g. letters, memos), informal written communication (e.g. personal notes), formal e-mail; informal e-mail, formal faxes and informal faxes.

The extent to which team-staff communication was two-way was examined using the percentage of brand team members who considered the communication to be two-way (Question 27 in Appendix 1) and the percentage of staff who considered the communication to be two-way (Question 21 in Appendix 7).

Additional questions were included to explore *brand* communications, to supplement the more general aspects of inter- and intra-stakeholder group communication. Brand team members and staff were asked to indicate which channels, from a list of possible channels, the brand team used to communicate with staff about the nature of their brand (Question 25 in Appendix 1 and Question 21 in Appendix 7) and to assess the effectiveness of those channels used (Question 26 in Appendix 1 and Question 20 in Appendix 7).

4.4.5 Shared values

McDonald and Gandz's (1991) list of values was used to assess shared values (personal values) as well as brand values and corporate values. The selection of this instrument was discussed in Section 4.4.2. The level of shared values was calculated for each brand team by:

(i) taking the standard deviation for each scale item,

(ii) squaring it,

(iii) summing across the squared standard deviations of the scale items,

(iv) taking the mean (dividing by the number of scale items[2])

(v) and finally taking the square root of the overall mean.

Smaller values indicated a greater extent of shared values.

4.5 Consumer-based brand performance

Measures of consumer-based brand performance were discussed in Chapter 2 (Section 2.8.2). As there was no accepted way of measuring brand performance, three of the

[2] The number of value items differed between brands because each brand's specific characteristics were added to the generic list if not already included in the generic list. Although shared values examined brand team members' personal values, the wider research project looked at congruency between the brand's values, the organisation's values and personal values, so the same list of value items were used across questions.

measures argued to be of most importance in the literature were used to assess consumer-based brand performance: reputation, loyalty and satisfaction.

Reputation

Reputation has been suggested to influence consumers' decision-making in financial services owing to the difficulty of ascertaining long-term financial services offerings' value at the point of purchase (e.g. Thwaites, 1995).

By far the most popular measure of corporate reputation is Fortune Magazine's 'Most Admired Corporations' Survey (Fisher, 1996). The magazine asks approximately 11,000 executives, outside directors and financial analysts to rate the ten largest revenues companies in their industry on eight criteria: (i) quality of management; (ii) quality of products or services; (iii) ability to attract, develop and keep talented people; (iv) value as a long-term investment; (v) use of corporate assets; (vi) financial soundness; (vii) innovativeness; and (viii) community and environmental responsibility. Reputation is then measured using an aggregate score on these criteria.

Many studies have investigated reputation by using the rankings published by Fortune for various companies and then matching them with available performance data (e.g. Carter and Dukerich, 1997; Fombrun and Rindova, 1998; McMillan and Maheshkumar, 1997). However, this approach severely restricts empirical design in that companies cannot be freely selected for study, but are determined by those for which data are available. In addition, it is not clear how the eight criteria were originally derived and whether they are underpinned by theory or based on a definition, and no reliability or validity measures appeared to be available.

Reputation has been defined as "*the overall estimation of a company by its stakeholders*" (Fombrun, 1996). Many authors have noted that different stakeholders use different criteria to assess reputation (e.g. Shenkar and Tuchtman-Yaar, 1997; Brown, 1998; Fombrun and van Riel, 1997; Saxton, 1998). Yet the Fortune rankings are based on the evaluations of executives, outside directors and financial analysts, not customers, consumers, employees or shareholders. Indeed, Fombrun (1998) concluded that true reputational index could only be developed by sampling a representative set of stakeholders using a conceptually relevant set of criteria. Such a reputational index had not been developed at the time the research was designed. However, Fombrun has subsequently been engaged in developing the Harris-Fombrun Reputation Quotient (Fombrun and Sever, 2000), work on which is continuing.

Yoon, Guffey and Kijewski (1993) developed their own set of reputation attributes by averaging respondents' importance-weighted evaluation of a company's reputation on 10 reputation attributes derived from the literature and "*confirmed through informal communication with industry experts*" (p.221). However, they assessed reputation from only the perspective of buyers, not all stakeholder groups.

A more valid approach would be to interview different groups of stakeholders to examine what reputation means to them and the aspects that contribute to their evaluations of a brand's reputation. Items could then be devised to represent these aspects and factor analysed for each stakeholder group and overlapping factors between stakeholder groups identified.

Developing a rigorous, validated instrument for evaluating a brand's reputation was beyond the scope of the research. Instead, respondents were asked to assess the favourability of a brand's reputation on a 5-point scale with verbal anchors of "very unfavourable" and "very favourable". This measure was used as a consumer-based measure of brand performance.

Brand loyalty

Brand loyalty has been assessed in a vast number of ways in the literature. No single, valid measure of brand loyalty could be identified. Jacoby and Chestnut (1978) and Assael (1995) recommended that both behavioural and attitudinal measures be used to assess brand loyalty. Likewise, Day (1969, cited in Assael, 1995) claimed that the truly loyal consumer held a favourable attitude toward a brand as well as purchasing it repeatedly. Bloemer and de Ruyter (1999) argued that behavioural measures such as repeat purchases are too narrow because they are subject to situation factors and may not shed light on the reasons underlying loyalty. They recommended instead that consumers' dispositions in terms of their preferences or intentions were more important. Similarly, Assael (1995) observed that the term loyalty implied commitment rather than just repeat purchase. These observations are particularly pertinent to financial services, where the concept of repeat purchases has limited applicability.

Thus the research assessed brand loyalty in terms of both attitudinal loyalty and behavioural loyalty. Attitudinal loyalty was assessed as consumers' degree of liking for the brand, as recommended by Dall'Olmo Riley (personal communication) and Aaker (1991). Following de Chernatony and McDonald (1998) and Aaker (1996), two behaviour loyalty questions were used: would a consumer buy other products offered by this brand and would a consumer recommend this brand to others.

Consumer Satisfaction

Consumer satisfaction was assessed in terms of (i) overall satisfaction, (ii) satisfaction with staff and (iii) satisfaction with the product(s), using 5-point Likert scales with verbal anchors of "very dissatisfied" and "very satisfied". This approach is consistent with that used by other authors, who assessed overall satisfaction and satisfaction components considered to be drivers of overall satisfaction (e.g. Crosby and Stephens, 1987; Czepiel, Rosenberg and Akerle, 1974, cited in Garbarino and Johnson, 1999). Ennew and Binks (1999) even argued that satisfaction could be measured with a simple single-item scale with verbal anchors.

Combined measure of consumer-based brand performance

Data reduction was used to derive a single, combined measure of consumer-based brand performance. This simplified the statistical analyses performed on the data by reducing the number of variables and thus the case to variable ratios (an important consideration as analyses were conducted at the brand level). A principal components analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation was performed on the seven consumer-based brand performance variables (two measures of behavioural brand loyalty; attitudinal brand loyalty; three measures of satisfaction; and reputation). Both the scree plot and the eigenvalues>1 criteria indicated a one-factor solution. The variance accounted for by the factor was 60.767%, a level considered satisfactory in the social sciences (Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black (1998). The component score coefficient matrix is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Component score coefficient matrix for the combined measure of consumer-based brand performance.

Consumer-based performance variables	Component 1
Behavioural brand loyalty: consider using other products	0.107
Behavioural brand loyalty: prepared to recommend brand to other people	0.167
Attitudinal brand loyalty: liking for brand	0.211
Overall satisfaction with the brand	0.211
Satisfaction with staff	0.188
Satisfaction with the product(s)	0.195
Evaluation of the brand's reputation	0.183

4.6 Business-based brand performance

Business-based brand performance measures were also collected, although not as part of the questionnaire. The brand contact in each of the financial services organisations was asked to provide the following business-based brand performance measures: profit before interest and taxation (operating profit); return on capital employed (ROCE); market share; sales; and the number of customers for the calendar years 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1999. These measures were chosen through discussion with senior academics in finance and accounting in the Open University Business School, based on attempting to minimise the potential effects of non-brand-related factors. Profitability is one of the hardest measures with which to achieve cause and effect. Sales and market share and a change in these measures were identified as the most likely measures to be associated with the corporate brand. However, it transpired that comparable data were not available across the organisations. Instead, the financial database FAME was used to obtain comparable data for the following available business-based performance measures: profit (loss) before taxation; return on capital employed (ROCE); return on shareholder funds; and sales. Nevertheless, no FAME data were available for two financial services providers and some data were missing for other companies across the business-based measures.

A potential problem is that "*to gather consensus and performance data simultaneously ignores the time lag between planning and execution. Current performance is the result of strategic decisions made months, even years, ago*" (West and Schwenk, 1996). This is compounded by the notoriously frequent turnover of managers (e.g. Bird, 1998). The questionnaire data were collected between March 1999 and August 2000. To maintain consistency across the companies, the business-based data from FAME for 1999 were used and growth data from 1998-1999.

4.7 Piloting of the questionnaires

The generic questionnaire was adapted to develop a tailored version for each of the stakeholder groups. Feedback on the brand team questionnaire was received from appropriate contacts in the participating companies. It was also piloted on two individuals who undertook comparable brand management roles in two universities. Feedback was also obtained from two fellow researchers in the Open University Business School. The consumer questionnaire was piloted on a convenience sample of six consumers representing a spectrum of ages (29-60 years) and range of occupations. Owing to the difficulty of recruiting companies, it was not possible to use financial services staff to pilot the staff questionnaire. However, the pilot sample of five included a former branch consumer-facing employee of a financial services company and members of university staff conducting similar contact roles with students at The Open University. Although the numbers piloted were small, the questionnaires were essentially generic with a small number of adaptations to each stakeholder group, so the generic questionnaire was effectively exposed to a larger pooled pilot sample. In addition, all the companies provided feedback on the questionnaires and suggestions for modification based on their experience of conducting research with the different stakeholder groups.

As a further check, all the returned questionnaires from the first company were examined closely to check that respondents had answered appropriately and that there were no problems with respondents' comprehension of the questions. In only a few of the open-ended questions in the consumer questionnaire was there any evidence of a lack of comprehension by respondents (ranging between one and five respondents per question). This level was deemed acceptable.

4.8 Tailoring of the questionnaires

The generic questionnaires were tailored to each brand using the information contained in the brand plan, the brand's values and brand research documents provided by the brand contact. A brand's values, personality characteristics and relationship characteristics were appended to the generic brand values, brand personality and relationship scales if not already included in the existing items for these scales. The tailored questionnaires were sent to the companies for their approval and any amendments made through discussion with the contact in each company. It was stressed that the questionnaires should not be circulated within the brand team at this stage to ensure that brand team members completed their questionnaires independently.

Additional tailoring was undertaken for the staff and consumer questionnaires, because they were not expected to have the same level of brand knowledge as brand team members. The brand teams' responses to seven open-ended questions (relating to the brand's purpose, goal, envisioned future, role to achieve the envisioned future, positioning, and characteristics designed to convey consumers' ideal and actual self-concepts) were analysed to derive statements. These were approved by the brand contact in each company and then incorporated into the staff and consumer questionnaires as 5-point rating scales with verbal anchors of "strongly disagree" and "strongly agree". Again the tailored questionnaires were sent to the companies for approval. Only one company required a minor amendment to the goal statement for confidentiality purposes. However, the alteration did not change the general meaning of the statement.

4.9 Follow-up questionnaires

Follow-up questionnaires were used to increase the response rates. Response curves (with axes of number of returned questionnaires vs. time) were plotted and follow-up questionnaires sent out when a response curve levelled out. The period between the first and second mailings was typically about four weeks.

4.10 Recruitment of the financial services providers

Alumni of the Open University Business School working in the financial services sector were approached to help gain entry into financial services organisations. Consistent with Ennew's (1995) redefinition of the marketplace as 'financial services' to include banking, insurance, etc., based on the overlap in their offerings after deregulation, the financial services organisations which participated in the research were banks, building societies, insurance companies or retail brand financial services providers. The research focused on corporate brands. Many of the new endorsed brands for Internet Banking (discussed in Section 2.10) were largely introduced during or after the research was conducted. Furthermore, it was still too early to assess how successful these new brands would prove. Alumni or existing contacts in 46 financial services organisations were identified. However, 12 of the 46 organisations were excluded from consideration because they were not retail financial services brands, did not have an established brand in the UK or had recently been involved in a merger.

A copy of the letter[3] requesting these alumni's assistance in identifying the appropriate person in their organisation to approach about participating in the study is provided in Appendix 8. A letter was then sent to the relevant person, usually the Marketing Director, outlining the study and inviting their participation, a copy of which is provided in Appendix 9. Companies were assured of confidentiality regarding their participation in the research, the identification of their data and the identities of all respondents. A report on the findings for their own brand and copies of the research papers from the overall research were offered to each company to encourage their participation.

In an attempt to increase the sample size, an additional 21 financial services organisations were added to the pool of organisations invited to participate in the research. These were identified as well-known retail financial services brands from listings in The Yellow Pages Directory. The name and address of the Marketing Director was identified through

[3] All letters from The Open University Business School were signed by the professor heading the overall research project (within which the doctoral research was conducted) to enhance the status of the research backing.

telephone enquiries to these financial services organisations. As with the companies contacted via OUBS Alumni, a letter was then sent to the Marketing Director, as detailed above (see Appendix 10). Three further companies were excluded from consideration because they did not have appropriate brands or were undergoing a change of brand name. The letters were followed up with a telephone call from the researcher to ascertain whether the companies would agree to participate in the research and to answer any questions they might have.

Of the 52 financial services organisations finally targeted for participation, 12 companies (23%) participated in the research. Seventeen companies declined to participate (the primary reasons given were time and/or resource constraints). Seven companies agreed to participate but failed to progress with the research within reasonable time scales. Three companies had to withdraw owing to mergers. The remaining 13 companies failed to decide whether or not they wished to participate within the time scales of the research.

Of the 12 companies that participated in the research, 10 participated in all three studies, one participated in the first two studies[4] and one in only the first study. The research was undertaken during a period of turbulence and upheaval in the financial services sector, with the result that many companies lacked the resources to provide the information required or to progress with the research, whilst others that expressed interest in the research were unable to participate owing to mergers, take-overs or reorganisation.

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[4] This organisation was erroneously identified as a retail financial services brand; it was in fact a business-to-business brand. It was not therefore possible to collect consumer data for this brand. Analysis of the brand team and customer-facing staff data with and without this brand indicated that in most cases the results with this brand included did not appear very different to the results with the brand omitted. The results reported therefore include this brand. However, where notable differences occurred when the brand was omitted, both sets of results are reported.

4.11 Initial interviews with the brand contacts for each financial services provider

An interview was conducted with the relevant contact with primary responsibility for the corporate brand in each organisation that expressed interest in participating in the research. The interview was used to discuss the research in greater detail and to gather information about the brand. Each company supplied information about the corporate brand, such as the brand plan, the brand's values and brand research documents. This information was used to tailor the questionnaires and to increase understanding of the brand. Consistent with previous research with top management teams and middle management (e.g. Wooldridge and Floyd, 1990), the interview was also used to identify the members of the brand team for the first study.

4.12 Study 1: The brand team

4.12.1 Definition of 'brand team'

The brand team was defined as comprising those individuals responsible for designing and developing the brand strategy. This included both internal staff (Marketing, PR, etc.) and, where appropriate, those in external agencies working on the brand. Companies were asked to supply a list of the names, titles and addresses of the members of their brand team, using the above definition to identify the relevant people if a company did not have a formal brand team as such.

4.12.2 Method

All members of each company's brand team were sent a questionnaire (see Appendix 1[5]), together with a covering letter (see Appendix 11), a letter of endorsement from the company, brief instructions on completing the questionnaire (see Appendix 12) and a reply-paid envelope. Respondents were assured that their identities would be kept confidential and the reply-paid envelopes for returning the questionnaires were addressed directly to The Open University. Reminders to brand team members to return the questionnaires were given through the brand team contact in each company. Replacement questionnaires, covering letter, instructions and reply-paid envelopes were sent to non-respondents. Reminders were repeated until it became clear that no further questionnaires would be returned.

The mean usable response rate obtained for members of the brand teams was 82.5%, yielding respondent brand team sizes of between 5 and 13 members (the total mean response rate for brand team members was 82.9%). The high response rate may be attributable to the endorsement of the research by the participating companies, as it is comparable with studies of strategic consensus among top management teams and middle management that have adopted a similar approach to gaining company commitment and identifying management respondents for questionnaires. For example, Wooldridge and Floyd (1990) reported a usable response rate of 80.1%, Bourgeois (1980) obtained an overall response rate of 94.4% and Bourgeois (1985) a usable response rate of 93%.

[5] The development of the three stakeholder questionnaires were described in Section 4.4.

4.12.3 Preliminary analysis of the brand team questionnaires for additional tailoring of the consumer-facing staff and consumer questionnaires

Respondents' answers to the open-ended questions for five brand identity components (purpose, goal, envisioned future, role to achieve the envisioned future and positioning) were content analysed to derive statements that were used to tailor the consumer-facing staff and consumer questionnaires, as was described in Section 4.8.

4.13 Study 2: Consumer-facing staff

4.13.1 Definition of consumer-facing staff

Consumer-facing staff were defined as those staff who had daily contact with consumers (through whatever media). Staff such as supervisors who only had contact with consumers on rare occasions when there was a problem were excluded from the sampling. This approach is consistent with the selection of staff in a study of a retail bank by Wilson (1997).

4.13.2 Sampling

A target sample size of 50 consumer-facing staff was chosen. Given the large population sizes of consumer-facing staff in the companies and differences in the sizes of the companies themselves and their ranges of products, it was not possible to apply a proportional sampling strategy across companies. The target sample size of 50 was therefore necessarily arbitrary and primarily selected as an approximate midpoint between the target sample size of 100 consumers in Study 3 and the relatively small brand team sizes in Study 1, on the basis that consumers outnumber staff in the population.

Each company supplied names and work addresses of a random contact sample of 165 consumer-facing staff. Companies were asked to provide a list of data to help determine how best to select the random staff sample (see Appendix 13). The contact sample size of 165 was based on the typically used estimate of a 30% response in social science research in order to achieve the target sample size of 50. The mean usable response rate obtained for consumer-facing staff was 39.7% (the total mean staff response rate was 41%).

4.13.3 Method

The samples of consumer-facing staff were sent a questionnaire (see Appendix 7), together with a covering letter explaining the study (see Appendix 14), a letter of endorsement from the company, brief instructions on completing the questionnaire (see Appendix 15) and a reply-paid envelope. Respondents were assured that their identities would be kept confidential and the reply-paid envelopes for returning the questionnaires were addressed directly to The Open University. The number of returned questionnaires was plotted against time and a second copy of the questionnaire and a follow-up letter (see Appendix 16) were sent to non-respondents when the response curve flattened out.

4.14 Study 3: Consumers

4.14.1 Definition of consumers

Consumers were defined as individuals who held one or more products of a financial services provider and dealt directly with the provider, rather than through an intermediary.

4.14.2 Sampling

A target sample size of 100 consumers was chosen. As for staff, it was not possible to apply a proportional sampling strategy across companies owing to differences in the number of consumers and ranges of products of the companies that participated in the research. Each company selected a random contact sample of 333 consumers from products where consumers had direct contact with the company and a sufficient level of contact to be able to complete a questionnaire about the corporate brand. As for the consumer-facing staff sample, companies were asked to provide a list of data to help determine how best to select the random consumer sample (see Appendix 13). The contact sample size of 333 consumers was based on the typically used estimate of a 30% response rate in social science research in order to obtain the target sample size of 100. Samples were drawn in proportion to the number of consumers per product as far as possible, but numbers had to be adjusted to ensure sufficient sample spread across products.

Martin (1994) demonstrated that the level of interest in a topic can affect response rates, with participation being twice as likely for topics of high interest compared with low interest topics. Greer, Chuchinprakarn and Seshadri (2000) reported that the content of a study was the most important factor affecting response participation, followed by the sponsorship of the survey and the provision of reply-paid envelopes. Given that financial services are of limited interest to consumers (Levy, 1996), an incentive was offered to try to increase an anticipated low response rate. Although research has suggested that the inclusion of a small monetary incentive or gift rather than a promise is the most effective form of incentive (Goyder, 1994; Jobber, personal communication; Dommeyer, 1988), a contribution to charity was the form of incentive chosen for the research. There were two principal reasons for this decision. Given the increasing sophistication and disenchantment of financial services consumers (Thompson, 1999; Jones, 1999), a token monetary gift of 50 pence (which the research budget constraints would allow) was anticipated to be likely to elicit a cynical reaction from consumers. Pooling financial rewards across consumers, however, would allow larger donations to be made to a range of charities. The option of enclosing a small gift such as a pen was rejected because the frequency with which this approach is commonly used was considered to limit its impact as an incentive.

The form of incentive used was therefore a donation to a respondent's choice of charity by the Open University Business School from a choice of four charities covering a range of possible concerns. The four charities were Oxfam, the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), the Imperial Cancer Research Fund and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

The mean usable response rate obtained for consumers was 24.8% (the total mean consumer response rate was 27.6%), which although lower than the target rate of 30%, is consistent with the limited interest consumers are reported to have in financial services (Levy, 1996).

4.14.3 Method

The samples of consumers were sent a questionnaire (see Appendix 5), together with a covering letter explaining the study (see Appendix 17), a letter of endorsement from the company, brief instructions on completing the questionnaire (see Appendix 18) and a reply-paid envelope. Respondents were assured that their identities would be kept confidential and the reply-paid envelopes for returning the questionnaires were addressed directly to The Open University. The number of returned questionnaires was plotted against time and a follow-up questionnaire (see Appendix 19) was sent to non-respondents when the response curve flattened out.

4.15 Data analyses

The quantitative questionnaire data were entered into SPSS for Windows (version 10). Data checking was conducted by using the 'frequencies' and 'descriptives' printouts to check the validity of the data with regard to minimum and maximum values, to correct any inappropriate values and to examine any missing data.

The qualitative data were typed into tables in Microsoft Word. Content analysis (Krippendorff, 1980) of the qualitative data was then conducted, and, following Miles and Huberman's (1994) framework, themes in the data were identified.

In a minority of cases data were excluded from analysis where it was clear that a respondent had failed to discriminate between scalar items or had misunderstood a question.

A series of path analyses was conducted to evaluate sections of the conceptual model using EQS for Windows (Version 5.7). Owing to the small sample size at the brand level (as opposed to individual respondent level), no more than four variables were included at any one time in each path analysis. Relationships between individual variables in the conceptual model were tested using correlations and regression, as appropriate.

4.16 Structuring of the results chapters

The research results are reported in five separate chapters. The first chapter assesses the conceptual model, reporting the series of path analyses used to evaluate the goodness of fit of sections of the conceptual model. It thus provides an overview evaluation of parts of the model prior to reporting the more detailed analyses of the individual hypotheses associated with sections of the model. The next three results chapters report the results from the three studies with the three different stakeholder groups, which were used to collect data relating to different sections of the conceptual model, as was illustrated in Figure 3 at the start of the current chapter. The final chapter explores potential direct effects of team composition on aspects of brand management performance to supplement the analysis of the conceptual model in the preceding chapters. This enabled the impact of including the intervening variables in the conceptual model to be assessed.

CHAPTER 5: OVERVIEW ASSESSMENT OF THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview assessment of the conceptual model through a series of path analyses on sections of the model. It opens by examining a few key variables to give an initial overview of the goodness of fit of sections of the model, before examining the sections in more detail, inserting a larger number of variables sequentially into each path analysis. The chapter is thus a precursor to the three results chapters that follow, which explore the correlations between individual links in the conceptual model relating to the three stakeholder studies with the brand team, consumer-facing staff and consumers.

5.2 Path analyses on sections of the conceptual model

Owing to the comparatively small sample of corporate brands in the research, it was not possible to perform a single path analysis on the entire conceptual model. Instead, a series of path analyses was conducted to test sections of the model. This enabled theoretically derived causal paths to be assessed for goodness of fit. The path analyses were performed using the structural equation modelling package EQS for Windows (Version 5.7). The number of brands meant that no more than four variables were included in any one path analysis. Initially only a single measure was inserted into each box between the causal links in a section of the model to provide an overview of the assessment of the conceptual model. Then at a more detailed level, a series of path analyses was conducted for each path analysis relating to a section of the conceptual model, inserting a range of variables into each box in turn in separate analyses.

In the path analyses reported in the following sections, a significant p value for the Chi-square test of the independence model means that the independence model (i.e. that none of the pairs of variables in the path is correlated) is significantly worse than the saturated (perfect fit) model (i.e. that all possible paths between the variables are included). This means that there is something for the proposed model (i.e. section of the conceptual model) to explain. If this first Chi-square test is not significant, it means that there is nothing for the proposed path model to explain.

Assuming that the first Chi-square test is significant, a non-significant p value for the subsequent (second) Chi-square test of the proposed model against the saturated model means that the proposed model is not significantly different from the saturated model; i.e. the proposed model is a good fit. In addition, three fit indices indicate how much better the fit of the proposed model is in comparison to the independence (i.e. poor fit) model: the Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index (NFI), the Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI) and the Comparative Fit Index (CFI). All three indices should be 0.9 or higher if the proposed model is a good fit (Dunn, Everitt and Pickles, 1993). However, since few analyses yielded indices that were all above 0.9, indices close to 0.9 are also reported to give a fuller picture.

5.3 Overview analyses of sections of the conceptual model

In the following path analyses of sections of the conceptual model, summary measures of team diversity[1] and team, team-staff and team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity[2] were used and only one aspect of communication was examined: the overall mean frequency of communication.

5.3.1 Path 1: the path between team diversity and team congruency about the brand's identity mediated by team communication[3] and shared values[4]

The section of the conceptual model tested in Path 1 is shown in Figure 4.

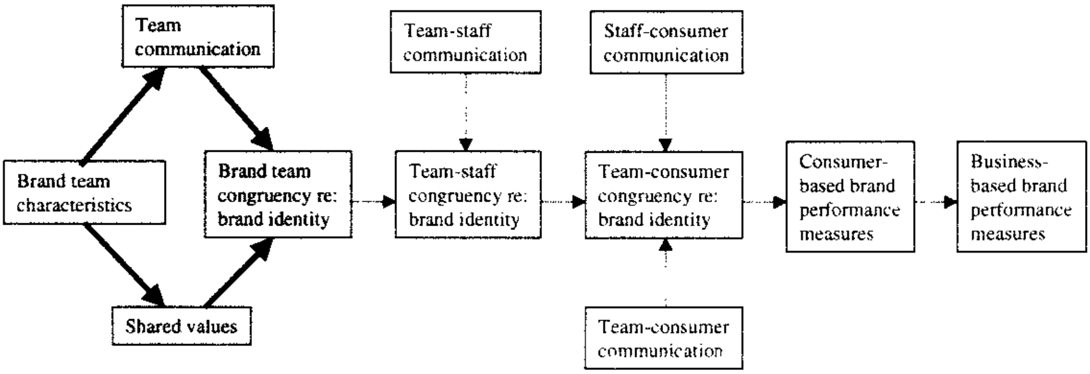


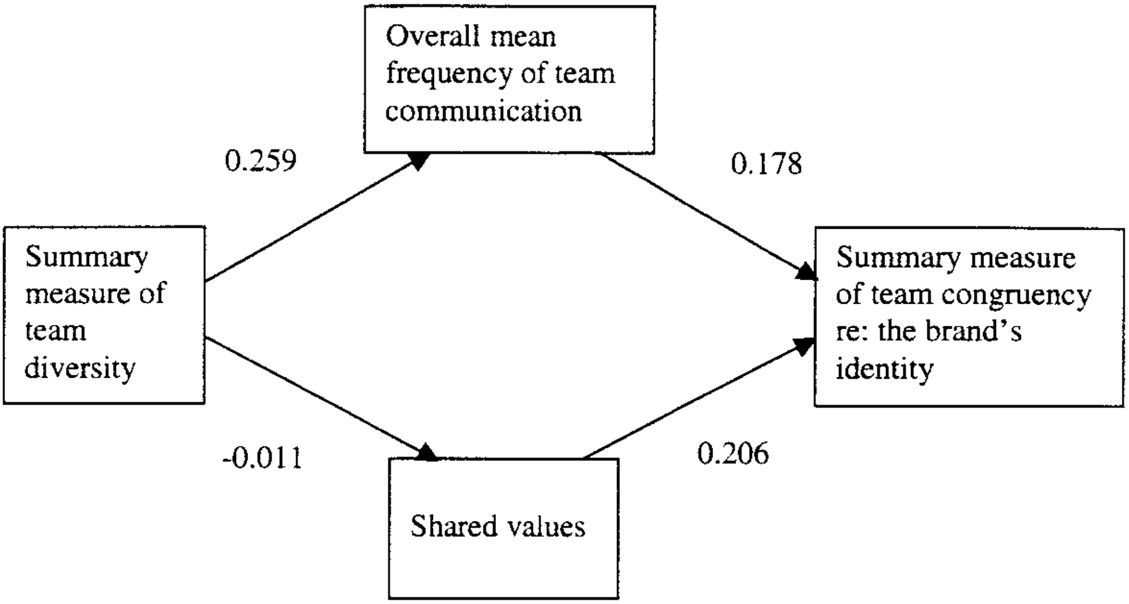
Figure 4. Section of the conceptual model to which Path 1 relates

[1] The summary measure of team diversity summarised the following team diversity variables: gender diversity (Blau's Index): functional diversity (Blau's Index), functional background diversity (Blau's Index), educational diversity (Blau's Index). internal vs. external membership diversity (Blau's Index), geographical dispersion diversity (Blau's Index). age diversity (standard deviation), team tenure diversity (standard deviation), company tenure diversity (standard deviation) and industry tenure diversity (standard deviation). The calculation of the summary measure of team diversity was described in Section 4.4.3.

[2] The summary measures of team, team-staff and team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity components summarised congruency about the following brand identity components that were assessed across all three stakeholder groups: purpose, goal, envisioned future, role to achieve the brand's envisioned future, positioning, brand values, brand personality and staff-consumer relationship. The calculation of the summary measures of congruency about these components of a brand's identity was described in Section 4.4.3.

[3] The overall mean frequency of team communication was the mean of the team mean frequencies of formal face-to-facing meetings, informal face-to-face meetings, formal written communication (e.g. letters, memos), informal written communication (e.g. personal notes), formal e-mail, informal e-mail, formal faxes, informal faxes and telephone conversations.

[4] The extent of shared values was calculated as the standard deviation of each item on McDonald and Gandz's scale assessing team members' personal values, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and finally square rooted (see Section 4.4.3).



Chi-square (independence model vs. saturated model) = 6.671

Degrees of Freedom = 6 p=0.352 (i.e. not significant)

Chi-square (proposed model vs. saturated model) = 5.334

Degrees of Freedom = 2 p= 0.069 (i.e. not significant)

Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 0.200

Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index = -13.902

Comparative Fit Index = 0.000

These results indicate that the proposed model is not a useful model. Although the second Chi Square indicates that proposed model is not significantly worse than the saturated model, the fit indices are poor. Furthermore, the first Chi Square indicates that the saturated model is not significantly better than the independence model; therefore there is no significant evidence of any significant correlations to explain in the proposed path. So the poor fit indices are not really surprising.

5.3.2 Path 2: team diversity – team communication – team congruency

The section of the conceptual model tested in Path 2 is shown in Figure 5.

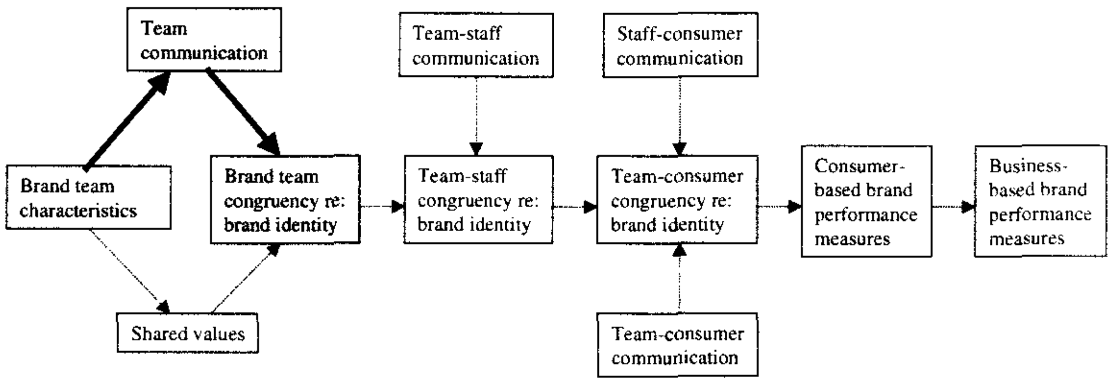
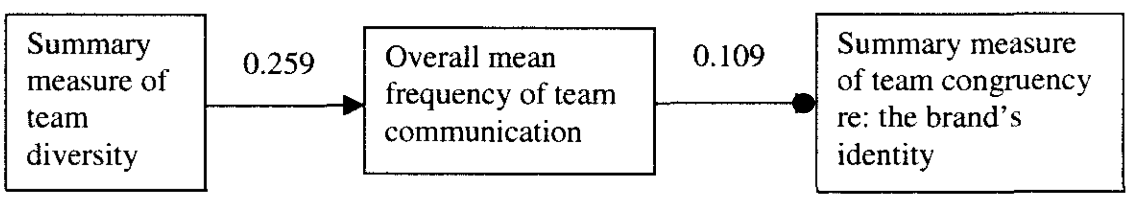


Figure 5. Section of the conceptual model to which Path 2 relates



Chi-square (independence model vs. saturated model) = 4.323

Degrees of Freedom =3   p=0.229 (i.e. not significant)

Chi-square (proposed model vs. saturated model) = 3.426

Degrees of Freedom = 1   p=0.064 (i.e. not significant)

Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 0.208

Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index = -4.500

Comparative Fit Index = 0.000

These results indicate that the proposed model is not a useful model. Although the second Chi Square indicates that the proposed model is not significantly worse than the saturated model, the fit indices are poor. Furthermore, the first Chi Square indicates that the saturated model is not significantly better than the independence model; therefore there is no significant evidence of any significant correlations to explain in the proposed path. So, again, the poor fit indices are not really surprising.

5.3.3 Path 3: team diversity – shared values – team congruency

The section of conceptual model tested in Path 3 is shown in Figure 6.

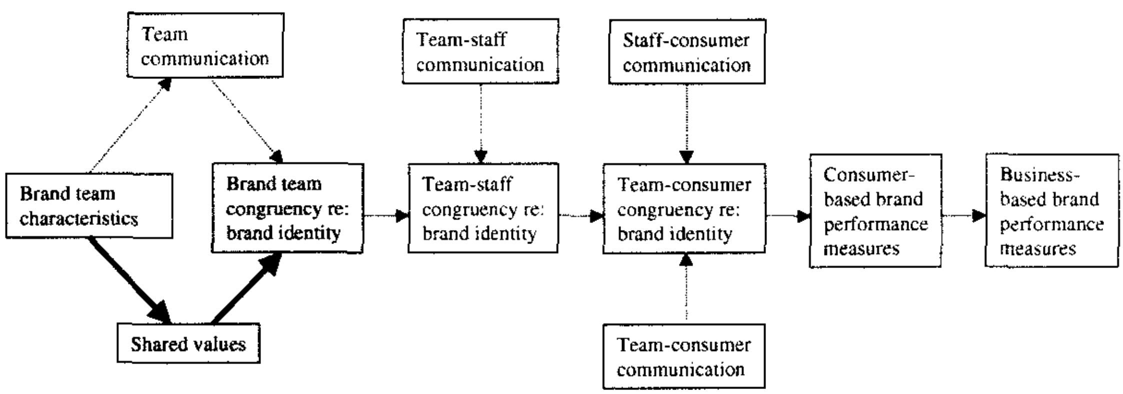
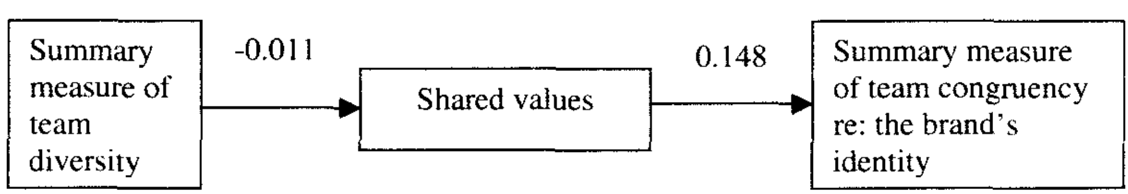


Figure 6. Section of the conceptual model to which Path 3 relates



Chi-square (independence model vs. saturated model) = 3.014

Degrees of Freedom = 3 p=0.390 (i.e. not significant)

Chi-square (proposed model vs. saturated model) = 2.770

Degrees of Freedom = 1 p= 0.096 (i.e. not significant)

Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 0.081

Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index = -369.906

Comparative Fit Index = 0.000

These results indicate that this section of the conceptual model is not a useful model. Although the second Chi Square indicates that the proposed model is not significantly worse than the saturated model, the fit indices are poor. Furthermore, the first Chi Square indicates that the saturated model is not significantly better than the independence model; therefore there is no significant evidence of any significant correlations to explain in the proposed path. So the poor fit indices are not really surprising.

5.3.4 Path 4: Team congruency – team-staff congruency – team-consumer congruency – consumer-based brand performance[5]

The section of the conceptual model tested in Path 4 is shown in Figure 7.

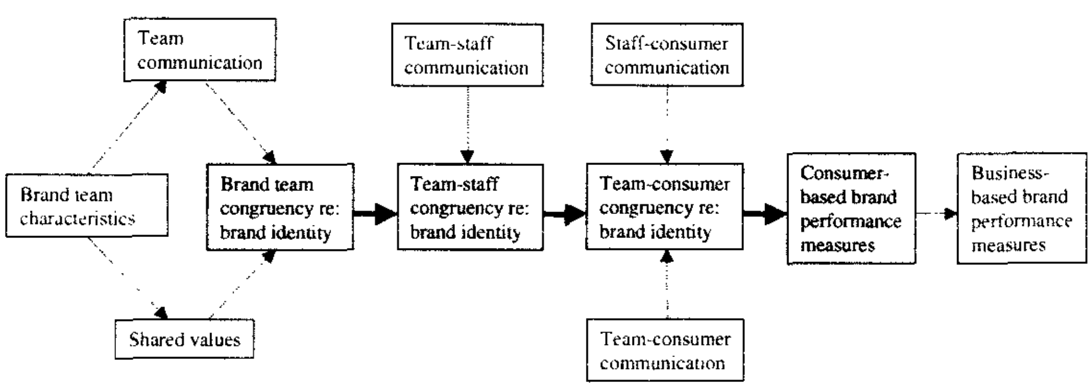
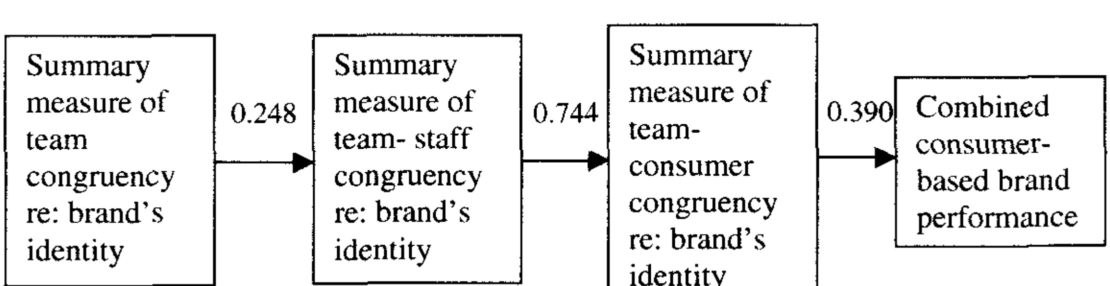


Figure 7. Section of the conceptual model to which Path 4 relates



[5] Consumer-based brand performance was assessed using the single factor combined measure described in Section 4.5.

Chi-square (independence model vs. saturated model) = 12.678

Degrees of Freedom = 6 p=0.048 (i.e. significant)

Chi-square (proposed model vs. saturated model) = 3.378

Degrees of Freedom = 3 p= 0.337 (i.e. not significant)

Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 0.734

Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index = 0.887

Comparative Fit Index = 0.943

These results suggest that this section of conceptual model is quite a good fit. The first Chi Square indicates that the saturated model is significantly better than the independence model (i.e. there is significant evidence of significant correlations to explain) and the second Chi Square indicates that the proposed model is not significantly worse than the saturated model. It indicates that greater congruency between the brand team members facilitates greater congruency between the brand team and staff and consumers and leads to better consumer-based brand performance.

5.3.5 Path 5: Team-staff communication[6] – team-staff congruency – team-consumer congruency

The section of the conceptual model tested in Path 5 is shown in Figure 8.

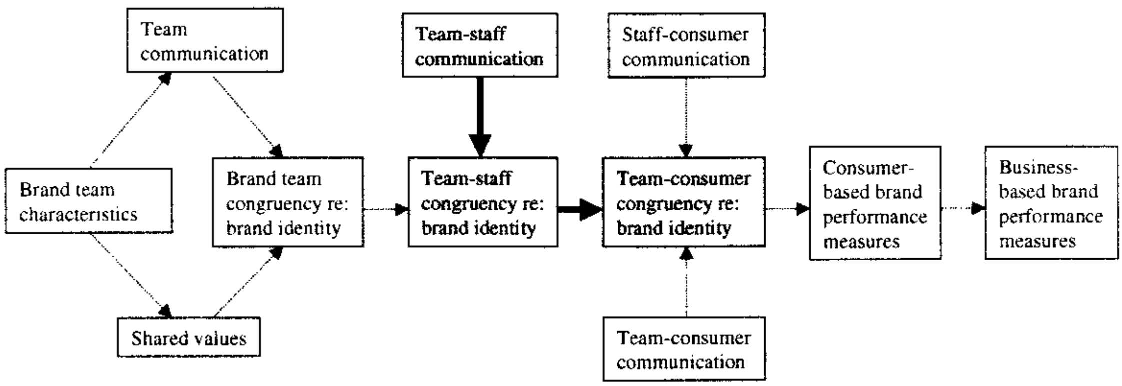
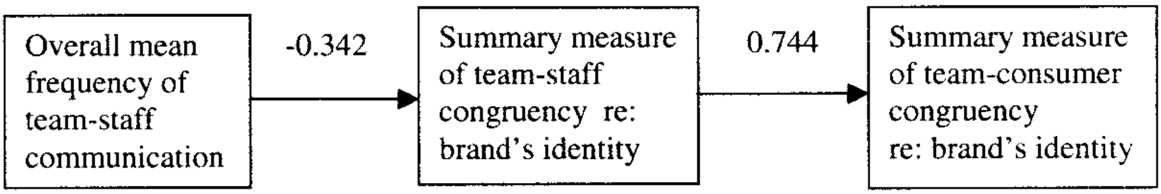


Figure 8. Section of the conceptual model to which Path 5 relates



Chi-square (independence model vs. saturated model) = 9.239

Degrees of Freedom = 3 $\quad$ p=0.026 (i.e. significant)

Chi-square (proposed model vs. saturated model) = 0.870

Degrees of Freedom = 1 $\quad$ p= 0.351 (i.e. not significant)

[6] The overall mean frequency of team-staff communication was the brand team's mean ratings of formal face-to-face meetings, informal face-to-face meetings, formal written communication (e.g. letters, memos), informal written communication (e.g. personal notes), formal e-mail, informal e-mail, formal faxes, informal faxes and telephone conversations with staff.

Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 0.906

Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index = 1.062

Comparative Fit Index = 1.000

These results suggest that this section of the conceptual model is a good fit. The first Chi Square indicates that the saturated model is significantly better than the independence model (i.e. there is significant evidence of significant correlations to explain) and the second Chi Square indicates that the proposed model is not significantly worse than the saturated model. However, it indicates that the frequency of team-staff communication is negatively related to team-staff congruency about the brand's identity. This is contrary to expectations, since more frequent communication between the brand team and staff was expected to increase the congruency between the brand team's and staff's perceptions about the brand's identity. Given that Path 4 indicated that greater congruency between brand team members about the brand's identity increased the congruency between the brand team and staff about the brand's identity, the implication is that staff have derived congruent brand perceptions through other means than communication with the brand team.

The section of the conceptual model tested in Path 6 is shown in Figure 9.

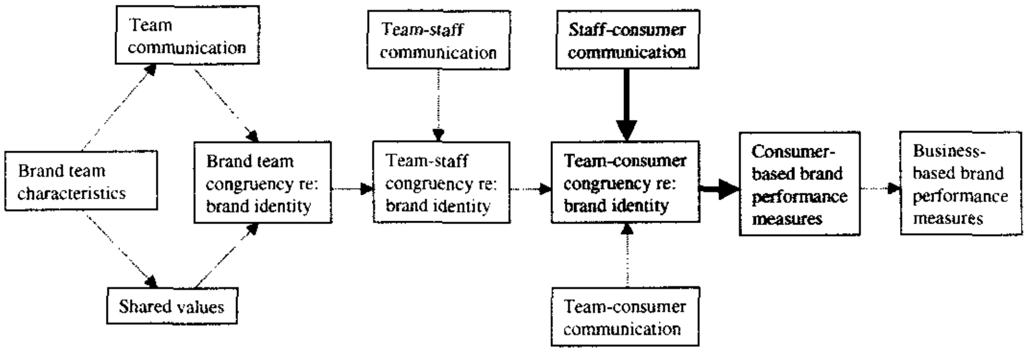
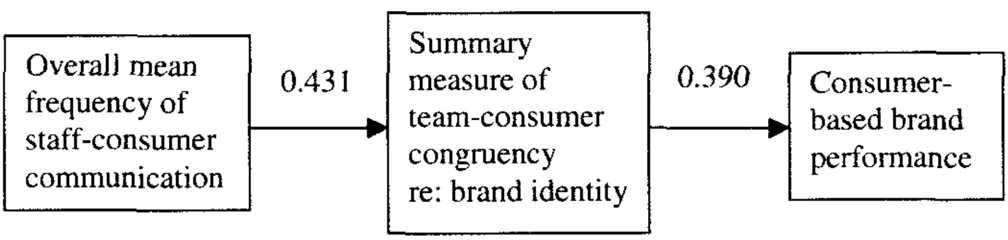


Figure 9. Section of the conceptual model to which Path 6 relates



Chi-square (independence model vs. saturated model) = 8.930

Degrees of Freedom = 3 p=0.030 (i.e. significant)

Chi-square (proposed model vs. saturated model) = 5.601

Degrees of Freedom = 1 p= 0.018 (i.e. significant)

Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 0.373

Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index = -1.328

Comparative Fit Index = 0.224

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[7] Consumer-based brand performance was assessed using the single factor combined measure described in Section 4.5.

These results indicate that this section of the conceptual model is not a good fit. Although the first Chi Square indicates that the saturated model is significantly better than the independence model, the second Chi Square indicates that the proposed model is significantly worse than the saturated model, i.e. there is an unmediated correlation between the overall mean frequency of staff-consumer communication and consumer-based brand performance as well as a mediated correlation through the summary measure of team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity.

5.3.7 Summary overview analyses of sections of the conceptual model

Only two of the five path analyses on sections of the conceptual model proved a good fit: (i) the path from team congruency about the brand's identity, to team-staff congruency about the brand's identity, to team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity to consumer-based brand performance; and (ii) the path from team-staff communication, through team-staff congruency about the brand's identity to team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity. Thus the data indicated only partial support for the conceptual model. In particular, there was a lack of support for the section of the conceptual model relating to the factors hypothesised to impact on the level of team congruency about the brand's identity. Nevertheless, to provide a more detailed picture of the hypothesised relationships in the conceptual model, a series of path analyses is reported in the following sections examining the effects of inserting individual variables, rather than summary variables, into separate path analyses.

5.4 Detailed analyses of sections of the conceptual model

The following sections provide a more detailed analysis of the path analyses of sections of the model reported in Section 5.3. The analyses mirror those in Section 5.3, but the analyses in Section 5.4 use *individual* variables rather than *summary measures*. To keep the analyses to a sensible number only a subset of variables was tested. The following key brand identity components that were examined across all three stakeholder groups were included in the path analyses: purpose, positioning, brand values, brand personality and the staff-consumer relationship.

5.4.1 Path 1: the path between team diversity and team congruency about the brand's identity mediated by team communication and shared values

The section of the conceptual model tested in Path 1 is shown in Figure 10.

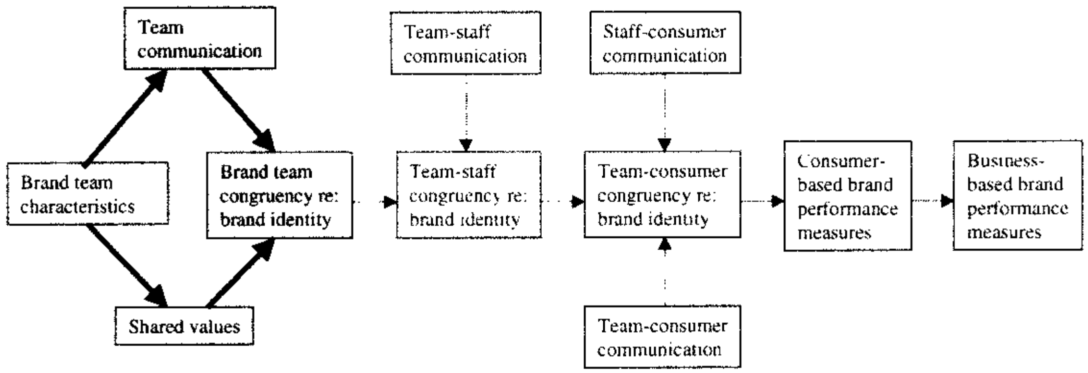


Figure 10. Section of the conceptual model to which Path 1 relates

Team characteristics variables

The subset of *individual* team characteristics variables examined were functional diversity (Blau's Index) and functional background diversity (Blau's Index) (instead of the summary measure of team diversity used in Section 5.3). These were chosen on the basis that they were the team characteristics with the greatest potential to provide beneficial diversity effects.

Team communication variables

The team communication variables examined were: (i) the overall mean frequency of team communication (the mean of the team mean frequencies of formal face-to-facing meetings, informal face-to-face meetings, formal written communication (e.g. letters, memos), informal written communication (e.g. personal notes), formal e-mail, informal e-mail, formal faxes, informal faxes and telephone conversations) (as in Section 5.3); and also (ii) the formality of team communication.

Shared values

As in Section 5.3, the extent of shared values (personal values) among brand team members was included in each path analysis (the extent of shared values was calculated as the standard deviation of each item on McDonald and Gandz's scale assessing team members' personal values, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and finally square rooted (see Section 4.4.3).

Team congruency variables

The subset of *individual* brand identity components (instead of the summary measure used in Section 5.3) examined was: purpose (mean citations), positioning (mean citations), brand values (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted), personality (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) and the staff-consumer relationship (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted), as explained in Section 5.4.

Each variable was inserted in a path analysis in turn, making a total of 20 path analysis combinations. Only one of the 20 analyses proved a good fit in terms of the second Chi Square test indicating that the proposed model was not significantly worse than the saturated model and the fit indices. However, in none of the 20 analyses did the first Chi Square test indicate that the saturated model was significantly better than the independence model. So there was no significant evidence of any significant correlations to explain.

5.4.2 Path 2: team diversity – team communication – team congruency

The section of the conceptual model tested in Path 1 is shown in Figure 11.

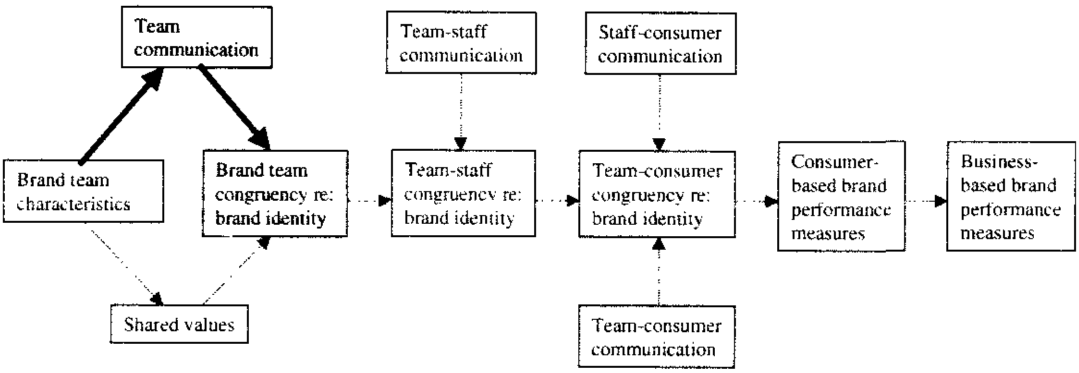


Figure 11. Section of the conceptual model to which Path 2 relates

Team diversity variables

The subset of *individual* team characteristics variables examined were functional diversity (Blau's Index) and functional background diversity (Blau's Index) (instead of the summary measure of team diversity used in Section 5.3). These were chosen on the basis that they were the team characteristics with the greatest potential to provide beneficial diversity effects.

Team communication variables

The team communication variables examined were: (i) the frequency of team communication (the mean of the team mean frequencies of formal face-to-facing meetings, informal face-to-face meetings, formal written communication (e.g. letters, memos), informal written communication (e.g. personal notes), formal e-mail, informal e-mail, formal faxes, informal faxes and telephone conversations) (as in Section 5.3); and also (ii) the formality of team communication.

Team congruency variables

The subset of *individual* brand identity components (instead of the summary measure used in Section 5.3) examined was: purpose (mean citations), positioning (mean citations), brand values (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted), personality (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) and the staff-consumer relationship (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted), as explained in Section 5.4.

Each variable was inserted in a path analysis in turn, making a total of 20 path analysis combinations. Only one of the 20 analyses proved a good fit in terms of the second Chi Square test indicating that the proposed model was not significantly worse than the saturated model and the fit indices. However, in none of the 20 analyses did the first Chi

Square test indicate that the saturated model was significantly better than the independence model. So there was no significant evidence of any significant correlations to explain.

5.4.3 Path 3: team diversity – shared values – team congruency

The section of the conceptual model tested in Path 3 is shown in Figure 12.

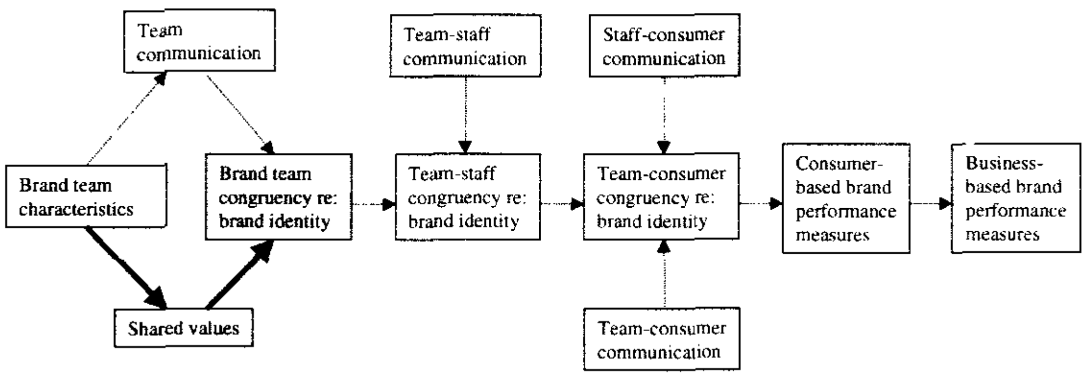
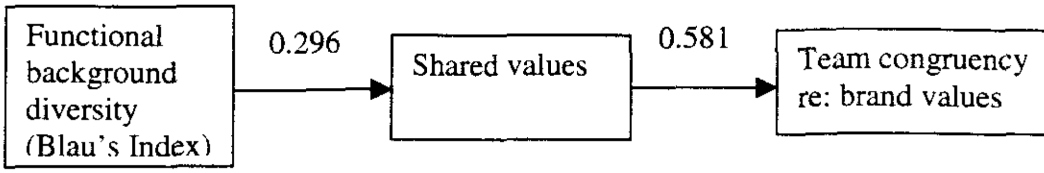


Figure 12. Section of the conceptual model to which Path 3 relates

The same subsets of variables were used as in Path 2, except the level of shared (personal) values (the extent of shared values was calculated as the standard deviation of each item on McDonald and Gandz's scale assessing team members' personal values, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and finally square rooted - see Section 4.4.3) was substituted for team communication. Each variable was inserted in a path analysis in turn, making a total of 10 path analyses. Three of the 10 path analyses proved a good fit in terms of the second Chi Square test indicating that the proposed model was not significantly worse than the saturated model and the fit indices. However, in only two of the 10 analyses did the first Chi Square test indicate that the saturated model was *almost* significantly better than the independence model (i.e. that there was *almost* significant evidence of correlations to explain):

(i)



Chi-square (independence model vs. saturated model) = 6.736

Degrees of Freedom = 3 p=0.081 (i.e. almost significant)

Chi-square (proposed model vs. saturated model) = 1.191

Degrees of Freedom = 1 p= 0.275 (i.e. not significant)

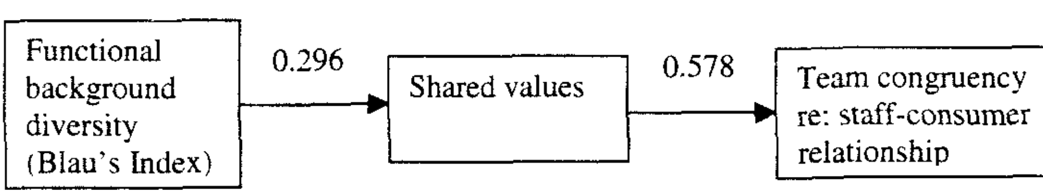
Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 0.823

Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index = 0.847

Comparative Fit Index = 0.949

Although the saturated model was not significantly better than the independence model, it was not far from significance (p=0.081).

(ii)



Chi-square (independence model vs. saturated model) = 6.677

Degrees of Freedom = 3 p=0.083 (i.e. almost significant)

Chi-square (proposed model vs. saturated model) = 1.195

Degrees of Freedom = 1 p= 0.274 (i.e. not significant)

Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 0.821

Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index = 0.841

Comparative Fit Index = 0.947

Although the saturated model was not significantly better than the independence model, it was not far from significance.

5.4.4 Path 4: Team congruency – team-staff congruency – team-consumer congruency – consumer-based brand performance

The section of the conceptual model tested in Path 4 is shown in Figure 13.

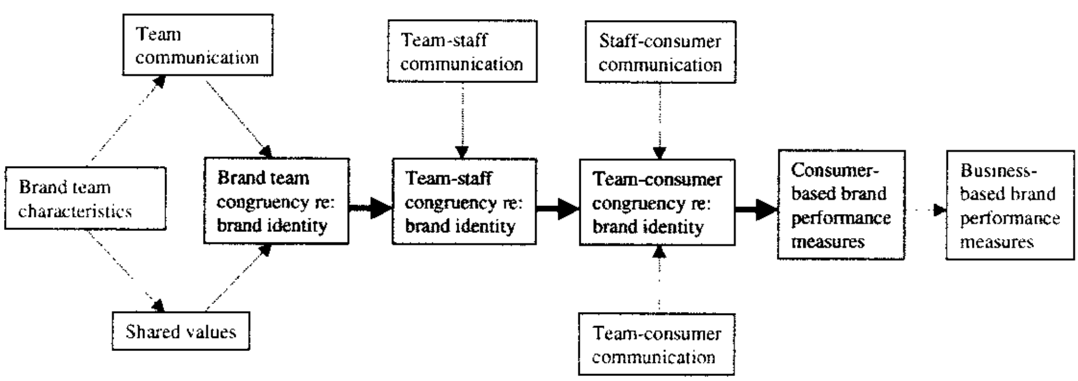


Figure 13. Section of the conceptual model to which Path 4 relates

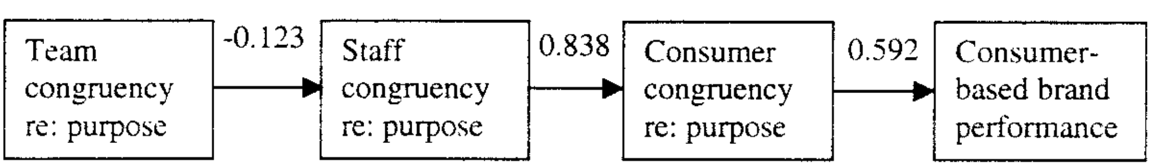
Congruency variables

The subset of *individual* brand identity components (instead of the summary measure used in Section 5.3) examined was: purpose (mean citations), positioning (mean citations), brand values (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted), personality (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) and the staff-consumer relationship (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted), as explained in Section 5.4.

Consumer-based brand performance

As in Section 5.3, the combined single factor score (as described in Section 4.5) was used as the consumer-based brand performance variable.

Each variable was inserted in a path analysis in turn, making a total of five path analyses. One of the five path analyses proved a good fit in that: (i) the first Chi Square indicated that the saturated model was significantly better than the independence model (i.e. there was significant evidence of significant correlations to explain); (ii) the second Chi Square indicated that the proposed model was not significantly worse than the saturated model; and (iii) the fit indices were acceptable:



Chi-square (independence model vs. saturated model) = 18.109

Degrees of Freedom = 6 p=0.006 (i.e. significant)

Chi-square (proposed model vs. saturated model) = 3.170

Degrees of Freedom = 3 p= 0.366 (i.e. not significant)

Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 0.825

Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index = 0.972

Comparative Fit Index = 0.986

5.4.5 Path 5: Team-staff communication – team-staff congruency – team-consumer congruency

The section of the conceptual model tested in Path 5 is shown in Figure 14.

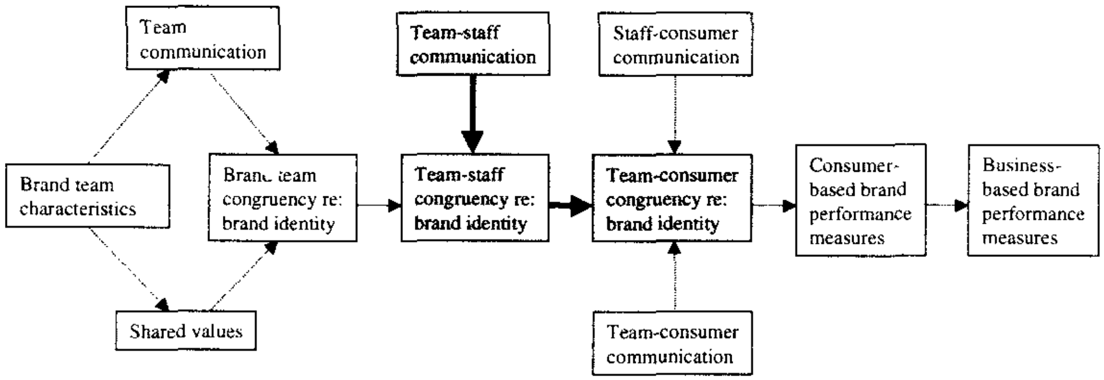


Figure 14. Section of the conceptual model to which Path 5 relates

Team-staff communication variables

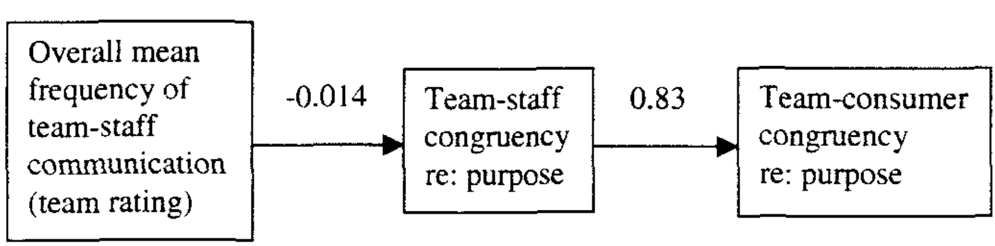
The team-staff communication variables examined were: (i) the overall mean frequency of team-staff communication (the mean frequency of formal face-to-face meetings, informal face-to-face meetings, formal written communication (e.g. letters, memos), informal written communication (e.g. personal notes), formal e-mail, informal e-mail, formal faxes, informal faxes and telephone conversations) (as in Section 5.3); but also (ii) the frequency of *direct* team-staff communication (the mean of the brand team mean frequencies ratings of formal face-to-face meetings, informal face-to-face meetings and telephone conversations with staff); (iii) the *formality* of communication; and (iv) the percentage of brand team members who considered the communication two-way.

Congruency variables

The subset of *individual* brand identity components (instead of the summary measure used in Section 5.3) examined was: purpose (mean citations), positioning (mean citations), brand values (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted), personality (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) and the staff-consumer relationship (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted), as explained in Section 5.4.

Each variable was inserted in a path analysis in turn, making a total of 20 path analyses. Ten of the 20 path analyses proved a good fit in terms of the second Chi Square test indicating that the proposed model was not significantly worse than the saturated model and the fit indices. However, for only five of these did the first Chi Square test indicate that the saturated model was significantly better than the independence model (i.e. that there was significant evidence of any significant correlations to explain):

(i)



Chi-square (independence model vs. saturated model) = 10.986

Degrees of Freedom = 3 p=0.012 (i.e. significant)

Chi-square (proposed model vs. saturated model) = 0.065

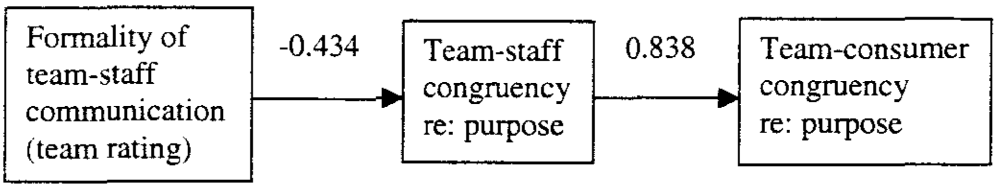
Degrees of Freedom = 1 p= 0.799 (i.e. not significant)

Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 0.994

Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index = 1.351

Comparative Fit Index = 1.000

(ii)



Chi-square (independence model vs. saturated model) = 12.797

Degrees of Freedom = 3   p=0.005 (i.e. significant)

Chi-square (proposed model vs. saturated model) = 0.000

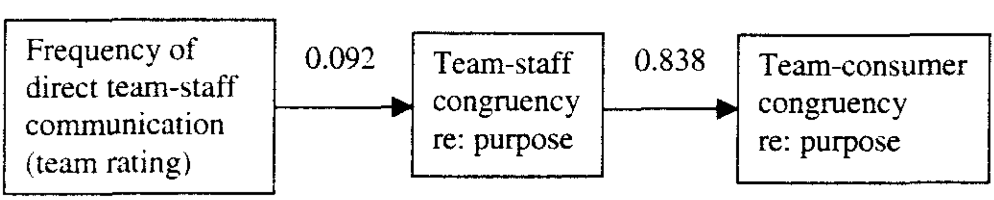
Degrees of Freedom = 1   p= 0.985 (i.e. not significant)

Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 1.000

Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index = 1.306

Comparative Fit Index = 1.000

(iii)



Chi-square (independence model vs. saturated model) = 10.997

Degrees of Freedom = 3   p=0.012 (i.e. significant)

Chi-square (proposed model vs. saturated model) = 0.000

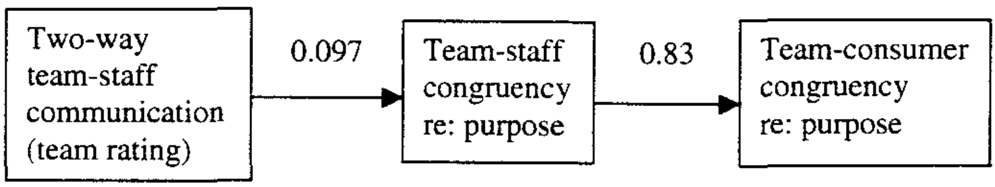
Degrees of Freedom = 1   p= 0.985 (i.e. not significant)

Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 1.000

Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index = 1.375

Comparative Fit Index = 1.000

(iv)



Chi-square (independence model vs. saturated model) = 11.430

Degrees of Freedom = 3 p=0.010 (i.e. significant)

Chi-square (proposed model vs. saturated model) = 0.425

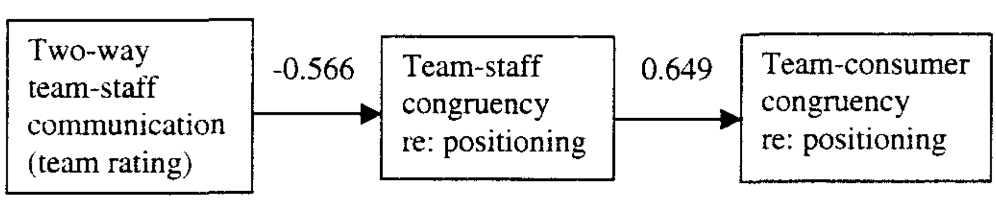
Degrees of Freedom = 1 p= 0.515 (i.e. not significant)

Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 0.963

Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index = 1.205

Comparative Fit Index = 1.000

(v)



Chi-square (independence model vs. saturated model) = 9.252

Degrees of Freedom = 3 p=0.026 (i.e. significant)

Chi-square (proposed model vs. saturated model) = 0.865

Degrees of Freedom = 1 p= 0.352 (i.e. not significant)

Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 0.907

Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index = 1.065

Comparative Fit Index = 1.000

5.4.6 Path 6: Staff-consumer communication – team-consumer congruency – consumer-based brand performance

The section of the conceptual model tested in Path 6 is shown in Figure 15.

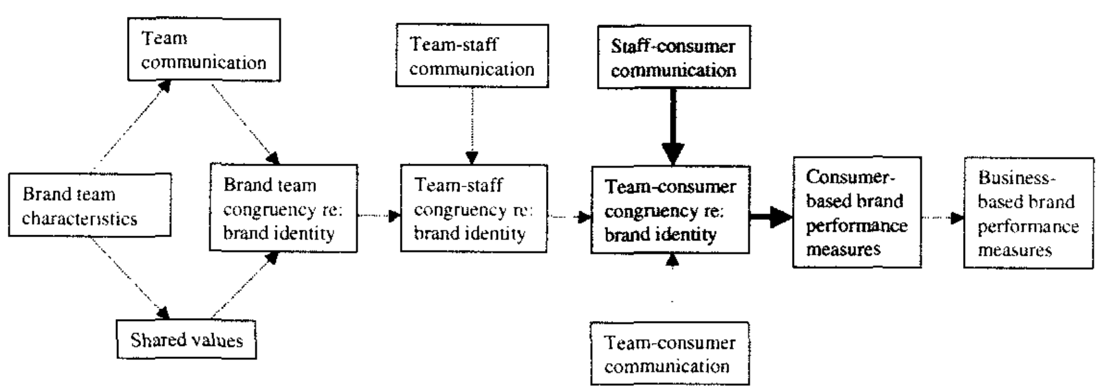


Figure 15. Section of the conceptual model to which Path 6 relates

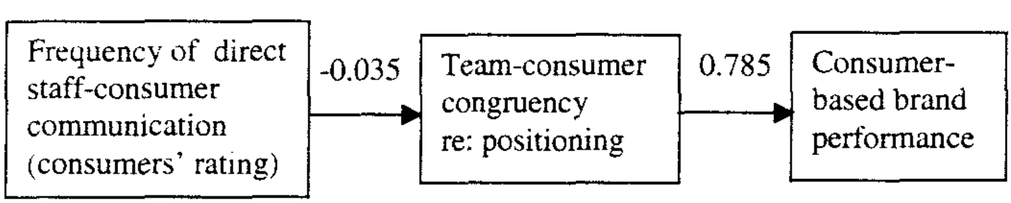
Staff-consumer communication variables

The staff-consumer communication variables examined were: (i) the overall mean frequency of communication (the mean of the consumers' mean frequencies of face-to-face meetings, written communication (letters), e-mail, faxes and telephone communication) (as in Section 5.3) (as in Section 5.3); and also (ii) the frequency of *direct* communication (the mean of the consumers' mean frequencies of face-to-face and telephone communication).

Congruency variables

The subset of *individual* brand identity components (instead of the summary measure used in Section 5.3) examined was: purpose, positioning, brand values, personality and the staff-consumer relationship, as explained in Section 5.4. Team-consumer congruency was measured as the mean consumer agreement with: the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses for the identity components 'purpose' and 'positioning'; and the absolute difference score of the mean brand team and mean consumer ratings for each scale item, squared, summed across items, meaned and square rooted for the identity components 'brand personality', 'brand values' and 'staff-consumer relationship'.

Each variable was inserted in a path analysis in turn, making a total of 10 path analyses. Three of the 10 path analyses proved a good fit in terms of the second Chi Square test indicating that the proposed model was not significantly worse than the saturated model and the fit indices. However, for only one of these did the first Chi Square test indicate that the saturated model was significantly better than the independence model (i.e. that there was significant evidence of any significant correlations to explain):



Chi-square (independence model vs. saturated model) = 9.307

Degrees of Freedom = 3 p=0.025 (i.e. significant)

Chi-square (proposed model vs. saturated model) = 0.659

Degrees of Freedom = 1 p= 0.417 (i.e. not significant)

Bentler-Bonett Normed Fit Index = 0.929

Bentler-Bonett Non-Normed Fit Index = 1.162

Comparative Fit Index = 1.000

5.5 Summary of assessment of the conceptual model

The path analyses on sections of the conceptual model indicated only partial support for the conceptual model. No support was evident for the front end of the model, relating to factors hypothesised to affect team congruency about the band's identity. However, the paths relating to the congruency between stakeholder groups and consumer-based brand performance and the impact of team-staff communication on stakeholder congruency were supported. Detailed analysis of the sections of the conceptual model were consistent with the overview path analyses.

Given that it was not possible to test the entire conceptual model in a single path analysis and the fact that only a subset of the variables was examined, it is not possible to accept or reject the model conclusively. However, some limited support for the model was evident.

CHAPTER 6 RESULTS OF STUDY 1: THE BRAND TEAM

6.1 Introduction

This chapter reports the results of the first study: the brand team. It relates to the first part of the conceptual model as highlighted in Figure 16 below.

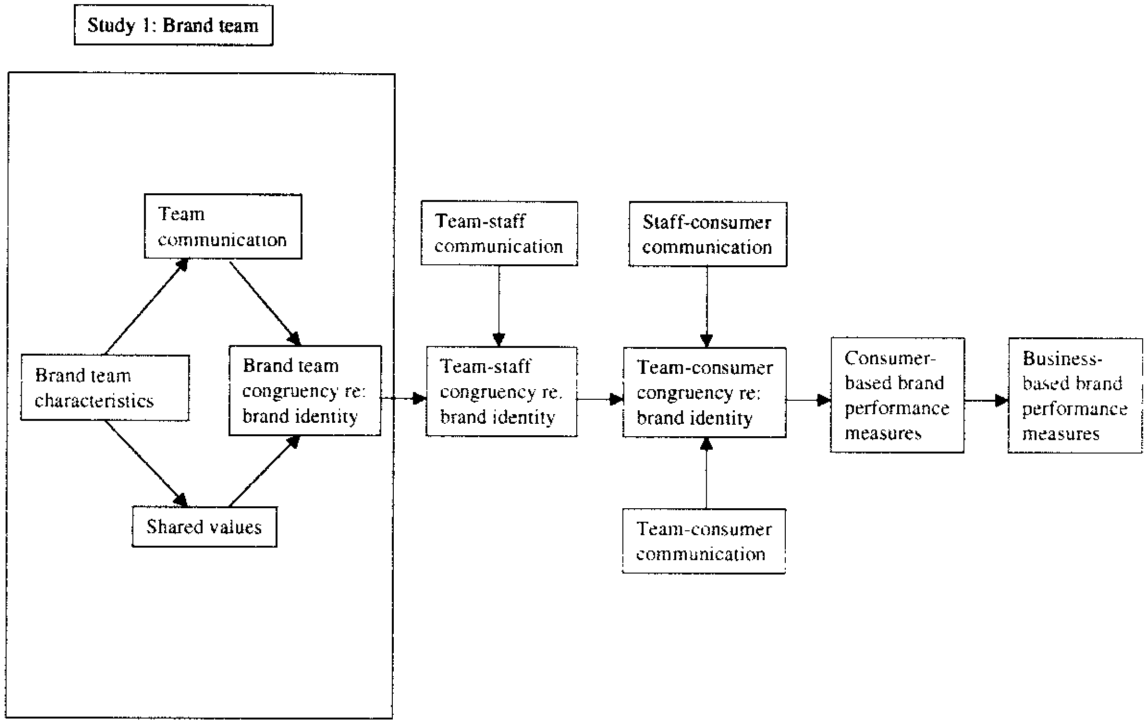


Figure 16. Section of the conceptual model addressed in Study 1: brand team

The results are structured in subsections related to the links in the conceptual model and by hypothesis within these subsections. However, before examining the links in the model and associated hypotheses, the composition of the brand teams is examined and factors correlated with team diversity explored.

6.2 Brand team composition

The descriptive statistics for the brand team diversity and composition variables are shown in Table 2. The values of the Blau Indices range between 0 and 1.00, where 0 indicates no degree of diversity. For example a value of 0 for internal vs. external membership (Blau's Index) means that brand team members were either all internal to the company or all external. For gender diversity, a value of 0 means that brand team members were either all male or all female.

Two factors were expected to be related to the degree of team diversity: team size and mean team tenure. The effects of these on the diversity of team characteristics are considered before examining the links in the conceptual model and associated hypotheses.

(i) The impact of mean team tenure on the diversity of team characteristics

There was no significant correlation between mean team tenure and the summary measure of brand team diversity[1] (r=0.116; N=12; p=0.719).

Of the individual diversity variables, only diversity in the length of team tenure (standard deviation of the length of team tenure) was significantly correlated with mean length of team tenure (r=0.948; N=12; p=0.000). The longer the mean team tenure, the greater the diversity in the length of team tenure.

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[1] The summary measure of team diversity summarised the following team diversity variables: gender diversity (Blau's Index); functional diversity (Blau's Index), functional background diversity (Blau's Index), educational diversity (Blau's Index), internal vs. external membership diversity (Blau's Index), geographical dispersion diversity (Blau's Index), age diversity (standard deviation), team tenure diversity (standard deviation), company tenure diversity (standard deviation) and industry tenure diversity (standard deviation). The calculation of the summary measure of team diversity was described in Section 4.4.3.

Table 2. Brand team diversity and team composition variables: descriptive statistics

Team diversity variables	**N**	**Minimum**	**Maximum**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
standard deviation of team age (years as decimal)	12	2.08	9.07	6.48	1.84
gender diversity - full team (Blau's Index[2])	12	0.00	0.49	0.34	0.18
standard deviation of team tenure (years as decimal)	12	.46	7.00	3.55	2.18
standard deviation of team company tenure (years as decimal)	12	3.22	8.96	6.36	2.04
standard deviation of team industry tenure (years as decimal)	12	6.11	9.34	7.22	1.00
functional diversity (Blau's Index)	12	0.00	0.72	0.41	0.22
functional background diversity (Blau's Index)	12	0.00	0.79	0.46	0.23
education (Blau's Index)	12	0.44	0.72	0.59	0.09
internal vs. external membership (Blau's Index)	12	0.00	0.48	0.22	0.21
geographical dispersion (Blau's Index)	12	0.00	0.83	0.33	0.28
Team composition variables	**N**	**Minimum**	**Maximum**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
mean team tenure (years as decimal)	12	1.35	7.28	4.07	2.13
team size (full team)	12	4	30	10.92	7.25
Additional team composition variables	**N**	**Minimum**	**Maximum**	**Mean**	**Std. Deviation**
mean company tenure (years as decimal)	12	2.67	11.80	7.77	2.75
mean industry tenure (years as decimal)	12	8.33	22.60	13.94	4.67
mean team age (years as decimal)	12	32.00	45.00	38.77	3.78
% male - full team	12	37.50	100.00	71.60	18.48
% of external team members (full team)	12	0.00	60.00	17.64	19.08
% of team with bachelors degree	12	0.00	100.00	52.94	25.73

[2] Blau's Index and its calculation were described in Section 4.4.1.

This finding is not really surprising. Turnover in team membership in long-tenured brand team will inevitably create a larger level of team tenure diversity between new and existing members than in shorter-tenured brand teams.

The mean length of team tenure was not significantly correlated with any of the other team diversity variables (standard deviation of age, Blau's Index of gender, standard deviation of company tenure, standard deviation of industry tenure, Blau's Index of function, Blau's index of functional background, Blau's Index of education, Blau's Index of internal vs. external membership and Blau's Index of geographical dispersion).

There is thus little evidence that longer-tenured brand teams were more homogeneous than shorter-tenured teams. Mean team tenures ranged between 1.35 and 7.28 years across the brand teams in the study. The overall mean team tenure of the sample of brand teams was 4.07 years with a standard deviation of 2.13 years. If the mean team tenures were very short, they might not have been long enough to mitigate the degree of team diversity. However, the mean team tenures encompassed by the sample of brand teams should have enabled the longer team tenure to reduce team diversity if such effects were present.

(ii) The impact of team size on the diversity of team characteristics

There was no significant correlation between the full brand team size and the summary measure of brand team diversity (r=0.217; N=12; p=0.498).

Of the individual diversity variables, a significant correlation was obtained between full brand team size and the Blau's Index of functional background diversity (r=0.725; N=12; p=0.008). The larger the full brand team size, the greater the diversity in functional background (i.e. the higher the diversity score). However, the correlation was not significant when the erroneous business-to-business brand was omitted from the analysis (see footnote 4 in Section 4.10) (r=0.415; N=11; p=0.204). This suggests that this brand strongly affected the significance of the correlation between brand team size and functional background diversity.

None of the other forms of team diversity (standard deviation of age, Blau's Index of gender, Blau's Index of internal vs. external membership, Blau's Index of function, Blau's Index of education, Blau's Index of geographical dispersion, standard deviation of brand team tenure, standard deviation of company tenure, standard deviation of industry tenure) was significantly correlated with brand team size.

The association between team size and functional background diversity is consistent with Bantel and Jackson's (1989) prediction that team size would be positively correlated with the level of demographic diversity and implies that the increasing size of the brand team under corporate branding is widening the range of skills, knowledge and information potential available to the brand team. However, the strong influence of the business-to-business brand on the significance of the finding throws doubt on its robustness.

When the business-to-business brand was omitted from the analyses, two other relationships were revealed. A significant correlation was obtained between full brand team size and mean brand team age (r= -0.766; N=11; p=0.006). The larger the full brand team size (i.e. the higher the score), the younger the mean team age (i.e. the lower the score). There was also an almost significant correlation between full brand team size and mean team tenure (r= -0.592; N=11; p=0.055). The larger the brand team size (i.e. the higher the score), the shorter the mean team tenure (i.e. the lower the score). These two findings suggest that under corporate branding brand teams are not only getting larger, but their members are younger and newer to the brand teams. To explore this relationship further, a correlation was calculated between mean team age and mean team tenure. The correlation between mean team age and mean team tenure was not significant (r=0.475; N=11; p=0.140) (with the business-to-business brand omitted). When the business-to-business brand was included the correlation between mean team age and mean team tenure was significant (r=0.577; N=12; p=0.050), but recall the original correlations between full brand team size and mean team age and between full brand team size and mean team tenure were not significant. This implies that the indications that larger brand teams are younger and newer are not significantly related.

6.3 The effects of brand team characteristics on brand team communication

Descriptive statistics for the brand team communication variables are shown in Table 3. The descriptive statistics for the brand team characteristics were shown in Table 2 in Section 6.2.

The following hypothesis was tested in this section of the model:

H1: The greater the diversity in team characteristics, the less frequent the team communication

There was no significant correlation between the summary measure of brand team diversity (described in footnote 2 of this chapter) and the overall mean frequency of team communication[3] (r=0.259; N=12; p=0.416).

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[3] The *overall mean frequency of team communication* was the mean of the team mean frequencies of formal face-to-facing meetings, informal face-to-face meetings, formal written communication (e.g. letters, memos), informal written communication (e.g. personal notes), formal e-mail, informal e-mail, formal faxes, informal faxes and telephone conversations.

There were no significant correlations between any of the individual team diversity variables (standard deviation of age, Blau's Index of gender, Blau's Index of team tenure, standard deviation of company tenure, standard deviation of industry tenure, Blau's Index of function, Blau's Index of functional background, Blau's Index of education, Blau's Index of internal vs. external membership and Blau's Index of geographical dispersion) and the overall mean frequency of team communication.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics for brand team communication (all variables were measured on 6 point scales with verbal anchors: 0=Never; 1=Very Infrequently; 5=Very Frequently)

Mean frequency of team communication	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Formal face-to-face	12	2.68	0.43
Informal face-to-face	12	3.55	0.47
Formal written (e.g. letters, memos)	12	2.78	0.50
Informal written (e.g. personal notes)	12	2.93	0.54
Formal e-mail	12	2.49	0.63
Informal e-mail	12	2.94	0.62
Formal faxes	12	1.74	0.34
Informal faxes	12	2.04	0.59
Telephone conversations	12	3.59	0.77
Summary measures of team communication	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Overall mean frequency of team communication	12	2.75	0.27
Mean frequency of direct team communication	12	3.27	0.34
Mean frequency of indirect team communication	12	2.49	0.28
Mean formality of team communication	12	2.53	0.36

Additional analyses: the effects of team diversity on the type of team communication

Additional analyses of the type of team communication were conducted to explore whether diversity affected the frequencies of *direct*[4] and *indirect*[5] team communication and the *formality*[6] of team communication.

There were no significant correlations between the summary measure of brand team diversity and the mean frequency of direct team communication (r=0.410; N=12; p=0.186), the mean frequency of indirect team communication (r=0.125; N=12; p=0.699) or the mean formality of team communication (r=0.302; N=12; p=0.340).

Of the individual team diversity variables, diversity in the length of brand team tenure was found to be significantly correlated with the mean frequency of indirect communication (r=0.607; N=12; p=0.037). The greater the diversity in the length of brand team tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the more frequent the indirect, text-based team communication. This correlation fell just short of significance when the business-to-business brand was omitted (r=0.596; N=11; p=0.053), but the difference was very small and was consistent with the finding with the full sample of 12 brands.

No significant correlations with the frequency of direct and indirect team communication were found for any of the other team diversity variables (age, gender, company tenure, industry tenure, function, functional background, education, internal vs. external

[4] *Direct communication* was the mean of the team mean frequencies of formal face-to-face meetings, informal face-to-face meetings and telephone conversations.

[5] *Indirect communication* was the mean of the team mean frequencies of formal written communication (e.g. letters and memos), informal written communication (e.g. personal notes), formal e-mail, informal e-mail, formal faxes and informal faxes.

[6] The formality of team communication was the mean rating on a 5-point scale where 1=very informal and 5=very formal.

membership and geographical dispersion). Thus contrary to the reports in the literature, team diversity did not appear to impair team communication.

Diversity in team tenure (standard deviation) was positively correlated with the *formality* of brand team communication (r=0.739; N=12; p=0.006). The greater the diversity in brand team tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the more formal the communication between team members (i.e. the higher the score).

There was also an almost significant correlation between diversity in company tenure and the formality of brand team communication (r=0.548; N=12; p=0.065). The greater the diversity in company tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the more formal was the communication between brand team members (i.e. the higher the score).

There were no significant correlations between the other team diversity variables (standard deviation of age, Blau's Index of gender, standard deviation of industry tenure, Blau's Index of function, Blau's Index of functional background, Blau's Index of education, Blau's Index of internal vs. external membership and Blau's Index of geographical dispersion) and the formality of team communication.

However, the results are consistent with Smith et al.'s (1994) finding that greater team diversity in experience (the average of the coefficients of variation in (i) the total months of experience in the industry, and (ii) the total months of experience with the company) was associated with more formal team communication.

Additional analyses: the effects of mean team tenure on team communication

Mean team tenure was not significantly correlated with the overall mean frequency of team communication (r=0.325; N=12; p=0.303). This result provides no support for Katz's (1982) finding that the frequency of communication decreased as the length of group tenure increased. Mean team tenure was also not significantly correlated with either the frequency of direct communication or the frequency of indirect communication.

A significant correlation occurred between mean team tenure and the formality of team communication (r=0.611; N=12; p=0.035). The longer the mean team tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the more formal the team communication (i.e. the higher the score). This correlation fell just short of significance when the business-to-business brand was omitted (r=0.559; N=11; p=0.074), but the difference was very small and consistent with the finding with the full sample of 12 brands.

Additional analyses: the effects of team size on team communication

A negative correlation just below significance was found between the full team size and the overall mean frequency of team communication (r= -0.554; N=12; p=0.062). When the business-to-business brand was omitted the correlation was significant (r= -0.663; N=11; p=0.026). Consistent with the literature (Iaquinto and Fredrickson, 1997) the larger the team size (i.e. the higher the score), the less frequent the overall mean frequency of communication between brand team members (i.e. the lower the score).

The frequency of *direct* and *indirect* communication was also examined in relation to team size. A significant correlation was obtained between the full team size and the mean frequency of indirect, text-based team communication (r= -0.718; N=12; p=0.008). The larger the full brand team size (i.e. the higher the score), the less frequent the mean indirect team communication (i.e. the lower the score). There was no significant correlation between the full team size and the mean frequency of direct team communication.

Team size was also not significantly correlated with the formality of team communication. This is contrary to the findings of Smith et al. (1994).

Additional analyses: the effects of other team composition variables on team communication

Additional exploratory analyses with other team composition variables (mean age, mean team tenure, mean company tenure and mean industry tenure) revealed significant correlations between mean team age and the overall mean frequency of team communication ($r=0.674$; $N=12$; $p=0.016$) and between mean team age and the frequency of *indirect* team communication (0.651; $N=12$; $p=0.022$). The older the mean team age, the greater the overall mean frequency of communication among brand team members and the more frequent the indirect team communication. A tendency was also observed for mean team age to be associated with the frequency of direct team communication ($r=0.538$; $N=12$; $p=0.071$). The older the mean team age, the more frequent the direct team communication.

A significant correlation was obtained between mean company tenure and the *formality* of team communication ($r=0.767$; $N=12$; $p=0.004$). The longer the mean company tenure, the more formal the team communication.

6.4 The effects of brand team characteristics on shared values[7]

Descriptive statistics for shared values are shown in Table 4. The descriptive statistics for the brand team characteristics were shown in Table 2 in Section 6.2.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics for shared (personal) values among brand team members (see Footnote 7 for calculation of shared values)

Team variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Shared values	12	0.77	0.004

The following hypothesis was tested in this section of the model:

H2: The greater the diversity in team characteristics, the lower the extent of shared values.

There was no significant correlation between the summary measure of brand team diversity (described in footnote 2 of this chapter) and the extent of shared (personal) values among brand team members ($r= -0.037$; $N=12$; $p=0.908$).

None of the individual team diversity variables (standard deviation of age, Blau's Index of gender, standard deviation of team tenure, standard deviation of company tenure, standard deviation of industry tenure, Blau's Index of function, Blau's Index of functional

[7] The extent of shared values was calculated as the standard deviation of each item on McDonald and Gandz's scale assessing team members' personal values, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and finally square rooted (see Section 4.4.3).

background, Blau's Index of education, Blau's Index of internal vs. external membership and Blau's Index of geographical dispersion) were significantly correlated with the extent of shared values among brand team members.

Contrary to the arguments in the literature, there was thus little support for this hypothesis.

Additional analyses: the effects of mean team tenure on the extent of shared values

A significant correlation was obtained between the mean length of brand team tenure and the level of shared values ($r=-0.632$; $N=12$; $p=0.027$). The longer the mean team tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the more congruent were brand team members' shared values (i.e. the lower the score). The correlation falls short of significance when the business-to-business brand is omitted ($r=0.547$; $N=11$; $p=0.081$), but the trend is still evident. These findings are consistent with the those in the literature that team turnover is higher among the more dissimilar members (Wagner, Pfeffer and O'Reilly. 1984) and the reported tendencies for people to be attracted to similar others and to recruit team members similar to themselves (Schneider, 1987).

Additional analyses: the effects of team size on the extent of shared values

There was no significant correlation between full brand team size and the level of shared values. Thus no support was found for Wiersema and Bantel's (1992) proposition that large teams would have a lower extent of shared values.

6.5 The effects of shared values[8] on team communication[9]

Although not part of the conceptual model (as explained in Section 3.6), the following hypothesis was tested:

H3: The greater the extent of shared values among brand team members, the more frequent the team communication.

The correlation between the extent of shared values and the overall mean frequency of communication among brand team members was not significant (r= -0.357; N=12; p=0.254).

Additional analyses: the effects of the extent of shared values on types of team communication

The extent of shared values was not significantly correlated with the mean frequency of *direct*[10] team communication (r= -0.130; N=12; p=0.687), the mean frequency of *indirect*[11] team communication (r= -0.441; N=12; p=0.152), nor the *formality* of team communication (r= -0.300; N=12; p=0.343).

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[8] The extent of shared values was calculated as the standard deviation of each item on McDonald and Gandz's scale assessing team members' personal values, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and finally square rooted (see Section 4.4.3).

[9] The *overall mean frequency of team communication* was the mean of the team mean frequencies of formal face-to-facing meetings, informal face-to-face meetings, formal written communication (e.g. letters, memos), informal written communication (e.g. personal notes), formal e-mail, informal e-mail, formal faxes, informal faxes and telephone conversations.

[10] *Direct communication* was the mean of the team mean frequencies of formal face-to-face meetings, informal face-to-face meetings and telephone conversations.

[11] *Indirect communication* was the mean of the team mean frequencies of formal written communication (e.g. letters and memos), informal written communication (e.g. personal notes), formal e-mail, informal e-mail, formal faxes and informal faxes.

This provided support for the omission for this possible link in the conceptual model.

6.6 The effects of brand team communication on team congruency about the brand's identity[12]

Descriptive statistics for team congruency about the brand's identity are shown in Table 5. The descriptive statistics for the brand team communication variables were shown in Table 3 in Section 6.3.

The hypothesis tested in this section of the model was:

H4: The more frequent the brand team communication, the greater the team congruency about the brand's identity.

There was no significant correlation between the overall mean frequency of brand team communication and the summary measure of brand team congruency about the brand's identity (described in footnote 2 of this chapter) (r= -0.178; N=12; p=0.580).

With regard to the individual congruency variables, there were no significant correlations between the overall mean frequency of team communication and the congruency of brand team members' perceptions of any of their brand's identity components (the mean citations for the open-ended question components: 'core values', 'purpose', 'goal', 'envisioned future', 'role', 'positioning' and 'brand personality'; and the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted for the

[12] The calculation of team congruency about the brand's identity was described in Section 4.4.3.

scalar components: brand values, organisational values, brand personality, brand team relationship, team-staff relationship and ideal staff-consumer relationship). Thus there was no support for arguments in the literature that frequent communication facilitates congruent perceptions (e.g. Wagner, Pfeffer and O'Reilly, 1984).

Table 5. Descriptive statistics for team congruency about the brand's identity (the calculation of team congruency was described in Section 4.4.3).

Brand identity components	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Note: In the following components a higher score indicates greater team congruency			
Core values	12	2.32	0.70
Purpose	12	1.70	0.78
Goal	12	1.56	0.44
Envisioned future	12	1.29	0.28
Role to achieve brand's envisioned future	12	1.30	0.29
Positioning	12	1.83	0.74
Brand personality (open-ended question)	11	1.45	0.27
Brand identity components	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Note: In the following components a higher score indicates lower team congruency			
Brand personality (scale)	12	0.83	0.13
Brand values	12	0.88	0.15
Organisational values	12	0.75	0.30
Brand team relationship	12	1.20	0.18
Team-staff relationship	12	1.29	0.15
Ideal staff-consumer relationship	12	1.23	0.13

Additional analyses: the effects of types of team communication on team congruency about the brand's identity

There were no significant correlations between the summary measure of brand team congruency about the brand's identity and the mean frequency of direct team communication (r= -0.030; N=12; p=0.927), the mean frequency of indirect team communication (r= -0.241; N=12; p=0.450) and the mean formality of team communication (r= -0.253; N=12; p=0.428).

With regard to the individual components of brand identity, there were no significant correlations between the frequency of *direct* team communication and team congruency about the individual components of the brand's identity (listed above). However, a non-significant tendency was observed for the frequency of direct team communication to be associated with team congruency about the brand's positioning (mean citations) (r=0.540; N=12; p=0.070). The greater the frequency of direct team communication (i.e. the higher the score), the greater the team congruency about the brand's positioning (mean citations) (i.e. the higher the score). This correlation was significant when the business-to-business brand was omitted (r=0.615; N=11; p=0.032).

The frequency of *indirect* team communication was found to be significantly correlated with team congruency about the brand's core values (mean citations) (r= -0.609; N=12; p=0.036) and team congruency about the team-staff relationship (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) (r= 0.584; N=12; p=0.046). The more frequent the indirect team communication (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the brand's core values (i.e. the lower the score). Similarly, the more frequent the indirect team communication (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the team-staff relationship (i.e. the higher the score). The latter correlation between the frequency of indirect team communication and team congruency about the team-staff relationship fell just short of significance when the business-to-business brand was omitted (r= -0.572; N=11; p=0.066), but the difference was very small and the result was still consistent with the finding with the full sample of 12 brands.

These findings provide only weak support for the facilitating effect of direct communication and detrimental impact of indirect communication on the congruency of brand perceptions.

The only significant correlation between the *formality* of team communication and team congruency about the brand's identity was for the identity component 'the relationship between brand team members' (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) (r=0.686; N=12; p=0.014). The less formal the team communication (i.e. the lower the score), the more congruent were brand team members' perceptions regarding their team's relationship (i.e. the lower the score). However, when the business-to-business brand was omitted two further correlations were significant. The formality of team communication was significantly correlated with team congruency about the brand's envisioned future (mean citations) (r=0.623; N=11; p=0.041). The less formal the team communication (i.e. the lower the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the brand's envisioned future (i.e. the lower the score). When the business-to-business brand was omitted the correlation between the formality of team communication and team congruency about the ideal staff-consumer relationship (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) was also significant (r=0.683; N=11; p=0.021). The less formal the team communication (i.e. the lower the score), the more congruent were team members' perceptions about the ideal staff-consumer relationship (i.e. the lower the score). Thus there was only weak support for informal communication facilitating congruent perceptions.

6.7 The effects of shared values[13] on team congruency about the brand's identity

The following hypothesis was tested in this section of the model:

H5: The greater the extent of shared values among brand team members, the greater the *team congruency about the brand's identity.*

There was no significant correlation between the extent of shared (personal) values among brand team members and the summary measure of team congruency about the brand's identity (described in footnote 2 of this chapter) (r=0.386; N=12; p=0.215).

With regard to the individual brand identity components, a significant correlation was obtained between the extent of shared values (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) and the brand's role to achieve the envisioned future (mean citations) (r=0.675; N=12; p=0.016). The greater the extent of shared values (i.e. the lower the score), the less congruent were the brand team's perceptions of the brand's role (i.e. the lower the score). A significant correlation was also found between shared values (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) and

[13] The extent of shared values was calculated as the standard deviation of each item on McDonald and Gandz's scale assessing team members' personal values, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and finally square rooted (see Section 4.4.3).

congruency about the team-staff relationship (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) (r= -0.702; N=12; p=0.011). The greater the extent of shared values (i.e. the lower the score), the less congruent were the brand team's perceptions of the team-staff relationship (i.e. the higher the score).

When the business-to-business brand was omitted, two different correlations were obtained. The extent of shared values (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) was significantly correlated with team congruency about the brand's personality (open-ended question – mean citations) (r=0.683; N=11; p=0.029). The greater the extent of shared values (i.e. the lower the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the brand's personality (i.e. the lower the score). There was also an almost significant correlation between the extent of shared values (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) and team congruency about the brand's core values (mean citations) (r=0.592; N=11; p=0.055). The greater the extent of shared values (i.e. the lower the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the brand's core values (i.e. the lower the score).

These findings (both with and without the business-to-business brand) are contrary to those hypothesised, no explanation for which was apparent.

6.8 Summary of results from Study 1: The brand team

There was little evidence that longer-tenured brand teams had less diverse characteristics than shorter-tenured brand teams.

Larger brand teams were composed of members from significantly more diverse functional backgrounds, but were no more diverse than smaller teams with regard to any of the other team characteristics.

There was minimal evidence that team diversity reduces the frequency of team communication. However, brand teams with an older mean age were found to communicate more frequently and to engage in more frequent direct and indirect team communication. The length of brand team tenure, however, was not found to affect the frequency of team communication. Consistent with expectations, there were indications that larger brand teams communicated less frequently.

There was only limited support for the hypothesis that greater team diversity was associated with more formal team communication. However, longer team and company tenure and greater diversity in team and company tenure were associated with more formal communication among brand team members.

There was minimal evidence that either team diversity or larger team size were related to a lower extent of shared values. However, consistent with the literature, longer mean team tenure was significantly associated with a greater extent of shared values.

No evidence was found for a link between shared values and team communication of any type.

There was only weak support for the facilitating effect of direct communication and the detrimental impact of indirect communication on the congruency of team members' perceptions about the brand's identity.

The findings relating to the effects of shared values on team congruency about the brand's identity were inconsistent, the reason for which was not apparent.

Overall, these findings concur with the overview path analysis (Path 1) reported in Chapter 5, in showing a lack of support for the section of the conceptual model relating to factors hypothesised to affect brand team congruency about the brand's identity.

7 STUDY 2: CONSUMER-FACING STAFF

7.1 Introduction

This chapter reports the results of the second study: on consumer-facing staff. It relates to the middle part of the conceptual model as highlighted in Figure 17 below.

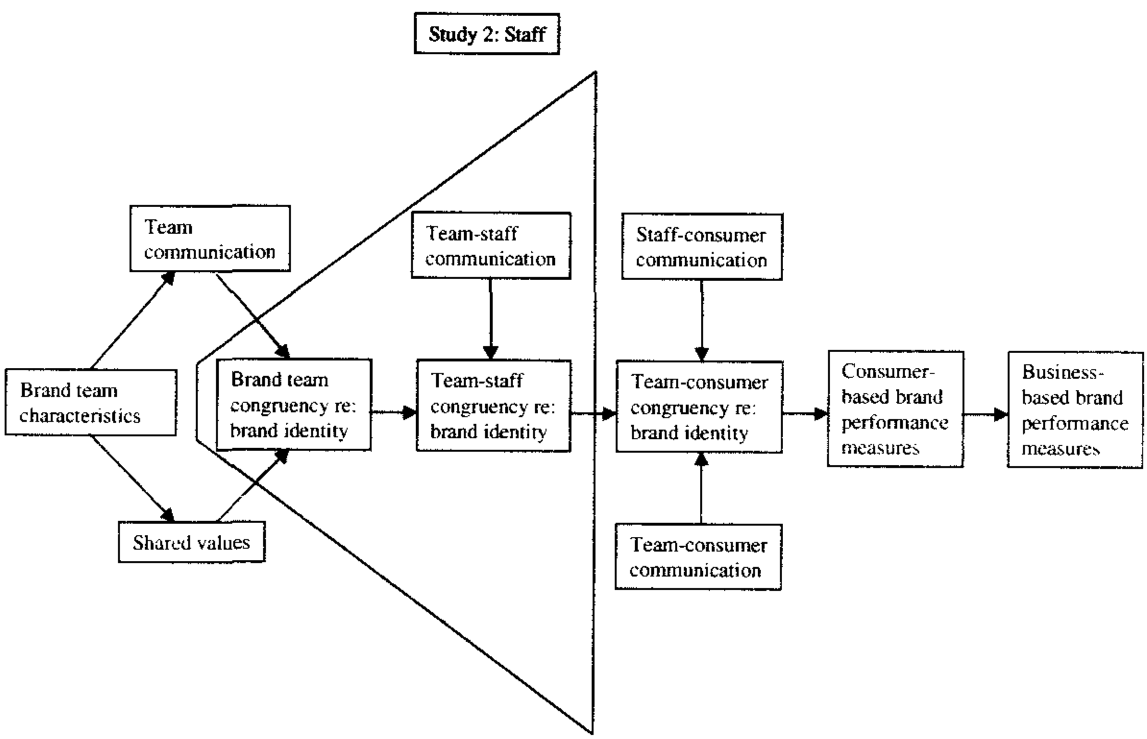

Figure 17. Section of the conceptual model addressed in Study 2: consumer-facing staff

The results are structured in subsections related to the links in the conceptual model and by hypothesis within these subsections.

7.2 The effects of brand team congruency on team-staff congruency about the brand's identity[1]

Descriptive statistics for team-staff congruency are shown in Table 6. The descriptive statistics for brand team congruency were shown in Table 5 in Section 6.6.

This section of the model tested the following hypothesis:

H6: The greater the congruency among brand team members about the brand's identity, the greater the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity.

No support was found for this hypothesis. There was no significant correlation between the summary measure of brand team congruency about the brand's identity and the summary measure of team-staff congruency about the brand's identity ($r=0.251$; $N=11$; $p=0.457$). There were also no significant correlations for any of the individual identity components between the congruency among brand team members about the brand's identity and the congruency between the brand team and consumer-facing staff about the brand's identity (measured as: the mean staff agreement with: the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses for the identity components 'purpose', 'goal', 'envisioned future', 'role' and 'positioning'; and the absolute difference score of the mean brand team and mean staff ratings for each scale item, squared, summed across items, meaned and square rooted for

[1] The summary measures of brand team and team-staff congruency about the brand's identity components summarised congruency about the following brand identity components that were assessed across all three stakeholder groups: purpose, goal, envisioned future, role to achieve the brand's envisioned future, positioning, brand values, brand personality and staff-consumer relationship. The calculation of the summary measures of congruency about these components of a brand's identity was described in Section 4.4.3.

the identity components 'brand values', 'organisational values', 'staff-team relationship' and 'staff-consumer relationship').

Table 6. Descriptive statistics for team-staff congruency about the brand's identity (the calculation of team-staff congruency was described in Section 4.4.3)

Brand identity components	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Note: The following scores indicate staff's level of agreement with the statements derived from the brand team's response for these components (the higher the score the greater the team-staff congruency)			
Purpose	11	3.95	0.58
Goal	11	4.24	0.57
Envisioned future	11	3.38	0.45
Role to achieve brand's envisioned future	11	4.23	0.33
Positioning	11	3.81	0.39
Brand identity components	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Note: The following scores indicate the difference between the brand team's and staff's ratings for these components (the lower the score the greater the team-staff congruency)			
Brand personality (scale)	11	0.48	0.17
Brand values	11	0.56	0.12
Organisational values	11	0.50	0.18
Team-staff relationship	11	0.65	0.16
Ideal staff-consumer relationship	11	1.09	0.15

7.3 The effects of team-staff communication on team-staff congruency about the brand's identity

Communication between the brand team and consumer-facing staff was analysed using the brand team's ratings, since these were considered to provide the more accurate reflection of the level of team-staff communication (the brand team would be more likely to be aware than staff of the communication).

Descriptive statistics for team-staff communication are shown in Table 7. The descriptive statistics for team-staff congruency were shown in Table 6 in Section 7.2.

The hypothesis tested in this section of the conceptual model was:

H7: The more frequent the communication between the brand team and consumer-facing staff, the greater the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity.

This hypothesis was tested using the overall mean frequency of team-staff communication reported by the brand team, since brand team members were expected to be more aware of the communication than staff.

There was no significant correlation between the overall mean frequency of team-staff communication and the summary measure of team-staff congruency about the brand's identity ($r= -0.348$; $N=11$; $p=0.295$).

Table 7. Descriptive statistics for the brand team's mean ratings of team-staff communication (all variables were measured on 6 point scales with verbal anchors: 0=Never; 1=Very Infrequently; 5=Very Frequently)

Mean frequency of team-staff communication	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Formal face-to-face	12	2.27	0.56
Informal face-to-face	12	2.63	0.65
Formal written (e.g. letters, memos)	12	2.42	0.72
Informal written (e.g. personal notes)	12	2.00	0.27
Formal e-mail	12	2.27	0.77
Informal e-mail	12	2.10	0.38
Formal faxes	12	1.02	0.72
Informal faxes	12	0.89	0.58
Telephone conversations	12	3.28	0.45
Summary measures of team-staff communication	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Overall mean frequency of team-staff communication	12	2.10	0.39
Mean frequency of direct team-staff communication	12	2.73	0.48
Mean frequency of indirect team-staff communication	12	1.78	0.42
Mean formality of team-staff communication	12	2.96	0.35

With regard to the individual congruency variables, no significant correlations were found between the brand team's mean rating of the frequency of communication between the brand team and consumer-facing staff (the overall mean frequency of formal face-to-face meetings, informal face-to-face meetings, formal written communication (e.g. letters, memos), informal written communication (e.g. personal notes), formal e-mail, informal e-mail, formal faxes, informal faxes and telephone conversations) and team-staff congruency about any of the components of the brand's identity (measured as: the mean staff agreement with: the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses for the identity components 'purpose', 'goal', 'envisioned future', 'role' and 'positioning'; and the absolute difference score of the mean brand team and mean staff ratings for each scale item, squared, summed across items, meaned and square rooted for the identity components 'brand values', 'organisational values', 'staff-team relationship' and 'staff-consumer relationship').

Additional analyses: the effects of different types of team-staff communication on the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity

There were no significant correlations between the summary measure of team-staff congruency about the brand's identity and the mean frequency of direct[2] team-staff communication ($r= -0.390$; $N=11$; $p=0.235$), the mean frequency of indirect[3] team-staff communication ($r= -0.270$; $N=11$; $p=0.422$) and the formality[4] of team-staff communication ($r=0.251$; $N=11$; $p=0.456$).

[2] *Direct team-staff communication* was the mean of the brand team mean frequencies ratings of formal face-to-face meetings, informal face-to-face meetings and telephone conversations with staff.

[3] *Indirect team-staff communication* was the mean of the brand team mean frequencies ratings of formal written communication (e.g. letters and memos), informal written communication (e.g. personal notes), formal e-mail, informal e-mail, formal faxes and informal faxes with staff.

[4] The formality of team-staff communication was the mean rating on a 5 point scale, where 1=very informal and 5=very formal.

Analysis of team ratings of the type of team-staff communication: direct and indirect communication did not reveal any significant correlations with team-staff congruency about any of the individual components of the brand's identity (measured as: the mean staff agreement with: the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses for the identity components 'purpose', 'goal', 'envisioned future', 'role' and 'positioning': and the absolute difference score of the mean brand team and mean staff ratings for each scale item, squared, summed across items, meaned and square rooted for the identity components 'brand values', 'organisational values', 'staff-team relationship' and 'staff-consumer relationship').

Significant correlations were found between for the formality of team-staff communication and team-staff congruency about two brand identity components: the brand's envisioned future ($r=0.639$; $N=11$; $p=0.034$) and the relationship between staff and consumers ($r=-0.623$; $N=11$; $p=0.041$). The greater the formality of team-staff communication (i.e. the higher the score), the more congruent were the brand team's and staff's perceptions about the brand's envisioned future (i.e. the higher the score) and the relationship between staff and consumers (i.e. the lower the score).

The effects of the percentages of brand team members and staff who considered the team-staff communication to be two-way on the team-staff congruency about the components of brand identity were also explored. The descriptive statistics for two-way team-staff communication are shown in Table 8.

A paired sample t-test revealed that the percentages of brand teams members and staff who considered the team-staff communication two-way differed significantly ($t=3.94$; $N=11$; $df=10$; $p=0.003$). Brand team members were more likely to consider team-staff communication two-way than were staff. Two series of correlations were conducted: one using the percentage of brand team members who considered team-staff communication two-way and the second using the percentage of staff who considered team-staff communication two-way.

Table 8. The percentages of brand team members and consumer-facing staff who considered the team-staff communication to be two-way

Two-way team-staff communication	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
% of brand team members who considered team-staff communication to be two-way	12	41.72	18.49
% of staff who considered team-staff communication to be two-way	11	17.93	12.42

A significant correlation was obtained between the percentage of brand team members who considered team-staff communication two-way and team-staff congruency about the team-staff relationship (the absolute difference score of the mean brand team and mean staff ratings for each scale item, squared, summed across items, meaned and square rooted) ($r=-0.622$; $N=11$; $p=0.031$). The higher the percentage of brand team members that considered team-staff communication two-way (i.e. the higher the score), the more congruent the team-staff perceptions about the team-staff relationship (i.e. the lower the score). However. the correlation was not significant when the business-to-business brand was omitted ($r= -0.222$; $N=11$; $p=0.537$).

There were also almost significant correlations between the percentage of brand team members' who thought that team-staff communication was two-way and team-staff congruency about the brand's goal (the mean staff agreement with: the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses) (r=-0.568; N=11; p=0.068) and team-staff congruency about the brand's positioning (the mean staff agreement with: the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses) (r=-0.568; N=11; p=0.068). The higher the percentage of brand team members that considered the team-staff communication two-way (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent was the team-staff congruency about the brand's goal (i.e. the lower the score) and the brand's positioning (i.e. the lower the score).

A significant correlation was found between the percentage of staff who considered team-staff communication two-way and team-staff congruency about the organisation's values (the absolute difference score of the mean brand team and mean staff ratings for each scale item, squared, summed across items, meaned and square rooted) (r=0.630; N=11; p=0.038). The higher the percentage of staff who considered team-staff communication two-way (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team-staff perceptions about the organisation's values (i.e. the higher the score). An almost significant correlation occurred between the percentage of staff who thought team-staff communication was two-way and team-staff congruency about the brand's positioning (the mean staff agreement with: the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses) (r=-0.567; N=11; p=0.069). The higher the percentage of staff who considered team-staff communication two-way (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team-staff perceptions about the brand's positioning (i.e. the lower the score).

Contrary to expectation, in general, the more brand team members and staff thought that team-staff communication was two-way, the less congruent was the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity.

Brand communication channels

Brand team members' and staff's ratings of the effectiveness of different types of channels used to communicate with staff about the corporate brand showed close correspondence and indicated that more active channels (workshops, presentations and videos) were considered more effective than document-based channels (memos, newsletters, posters and e-mail). These findings are illustrated in Figure 18.

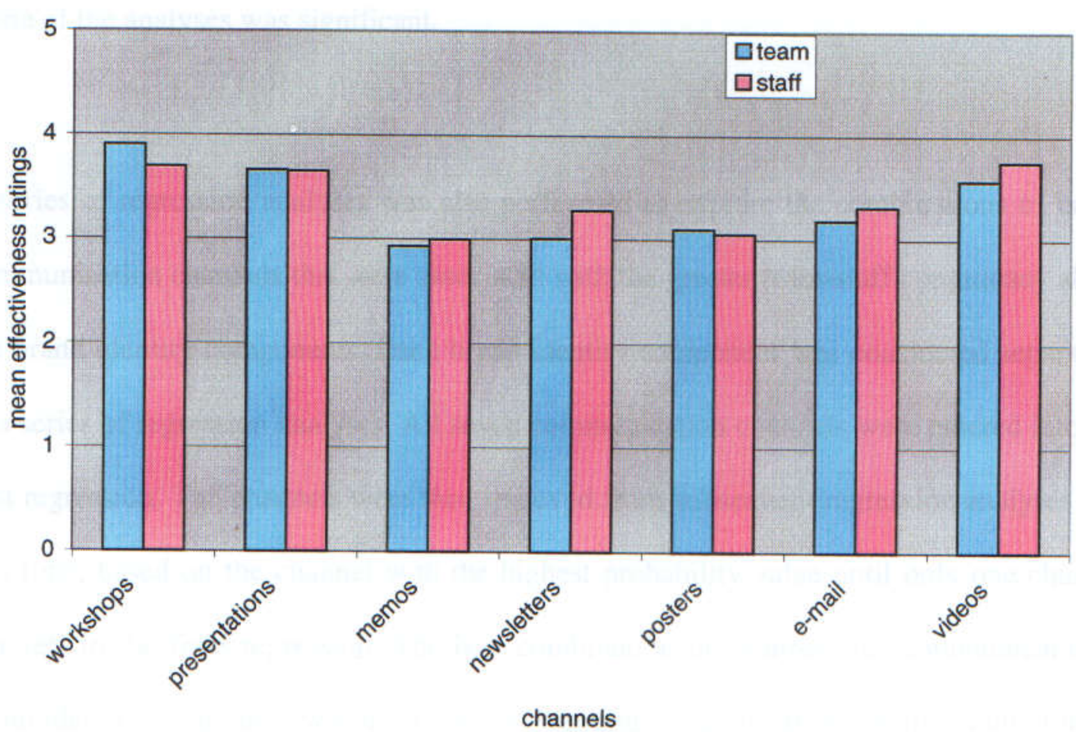

Figure 18. Mean brand team and staff ratings of the effectiveness of brand communication channels

However, individual correlations between each of the three active channels (workshops, presentations and videos) and team-staff congruency about each brand identity components revealed little evidence that the use of these channels was associated with greater team-staff congruency about the brand's identity. The only significant correlation found was between the percentage of brand team members who said that presentations were used to communicate the brand to staff and team-staff congruency about the brand's purpose (the mean staff agreement with: the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses) ($r=0.602$; $N=11$; $p=0.050$). The more brand team members that said presentations were used to communicate the brand to staff (i.e. the higher the score), the greater the team-staff congruency about the brand's purpose (i.e. the higher the score).

Regression analyses were performed for each of the brand identity components with the three active channels (workshops, presentations and videos) entered into each analysis. None of the analyses was significant.

A series of regression analyses was also performed to explore the combinations of brand communication channels that were associated with the greater team-staff congruency about the brand identity components. Each brand identity component was considered separately in a series of regression analyses. All seven communication channels were entered into the first regression. The channels were then removed from subsequent regression analyses one at a time, based on the channel with the highest probability value until only one channel was left in the final regression. The best combination of channels for communicating a brand identity component was identified by examining the lowest probability value for the models. The following key brand identity components were examined: purpose, positioning, brand values, brand personality and the relationship between staff and consumers.

Team-staff congruency about the brand's purpose

The model with the lowest probability value (p=0.034) indicated that workshops, presentations and newsletters comprised the combination of channels that best predicted team-staff congruency about the brand's purpose ($R=0.830$; $R^2=0.689$; Adjusted $R^2=0.556$; $N=11$; $F=5.174$; $DF=3, 7$, $p=0.034$). The fewer the workshops and the more presentations and newsletters, the better the team-staff congruency about the brand's purpose.

Team-staff congruency about the brand's positioning

The model with the lowest probability value (p=0.018) indicated that posters and e-mail comprised the combination of channels that best predicted team-staff congruency about the brand's positioning ($R=0.795$; $R^2=0.632$; Adjusted $R^2=0.540$; $N=11$; $F=6.861$; $DF=2, 8$; $p=0.018$). The more posters and the fewer e-mail used, the better the team-staff congruency about the brand's positioning.

Team-staff congruency about the brand's values

None of the regression analyses was significant.

Team-staff congruency about the brand's personality

None of the regression analyses was significant.

Team-staff congruency about the staff-consumer relationship

None of the regression analyses was significant.

7.4 Summary of results from Study 2: Consumer-facing staff

No support for this section of the conceptual model was found.

The brand team's and staff's perceptions about the direction of team-staff communication differed significantly; the brand team were more likely to consider the team-staff communication two-way than were staff. This made it difficult to assess accurately the extent to which team-staff communication was two-way and its impact on the congruency of their perceptions.

Both the brand team and staff considered the more active brand communication channels (workshops, presentations and videos) more effective than document-based channels (memos, newsletters, posters and e-mail). However, use of the active brand communication channels was not found to increase the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity. No clear evidence for the superiority of any particular brand communication channel in facilitating team-staff congruency emerged.

CHAPTER 8 RESULTS OF STUDY 3: CONSUMERS

8.1 Introduction

This chapter reports the results of the third study: on consumers. It relates to the final section of the conceptual model as highlighted in Figure 19 below.

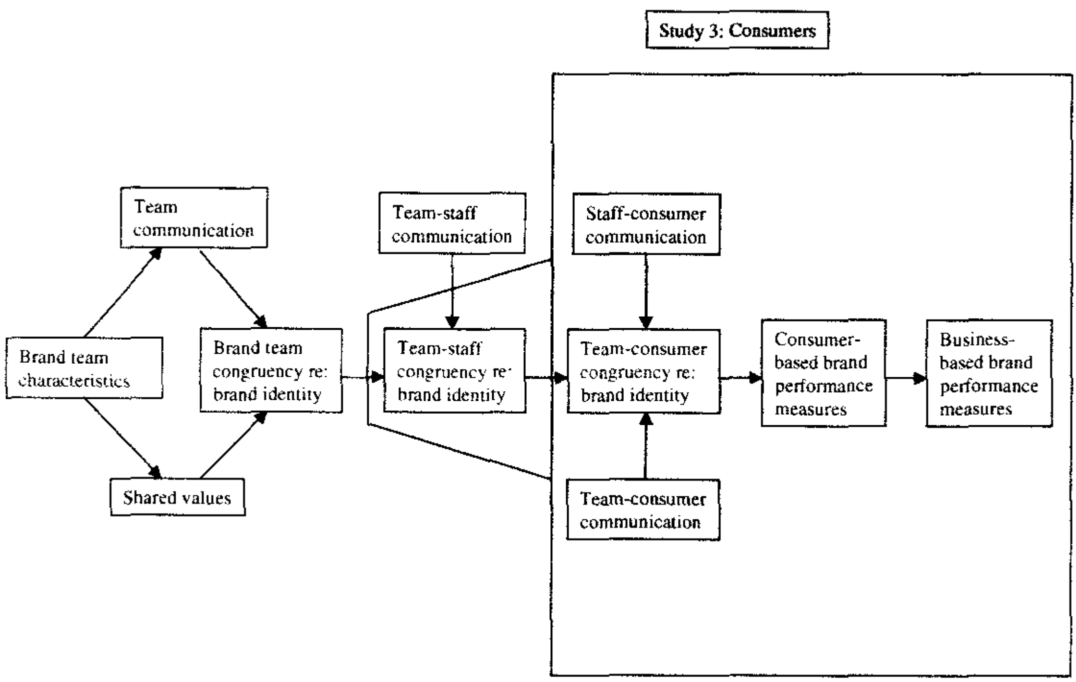

Figure 19. Section of the conceptual model relating to Study 3: consumers

The results are structured in subsections related to the links in the conceptual model and by hypothesis within these subsections

8.2 The effects of team-staff congruency on team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity

Descriptive statistics for team-consumer congruency are shown in Table 9. The descriptive statistics for team-staff congruency were shown in Table 6 in Section 7.2.

Table 9. Descriptive statistics for team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity (the calculation of team-consumer congruency was described in Section 4.4.3)

Brand identity components	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Note: The following scores indicate consumers' level of agreement with the statements derived from the brand team's response for these components (the higher the score the greater the team-consumer congruency)			
Purpose	10	3.74	0.40
Goal	10	3.75	0.25
Envisioned future	10	3.34	0.56
Role to achieve brand's envisioned future	10	4.06	0.28
Positioning	10	3.55	0.31
Brand identity components	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Note: The following scores indicate the difference between the brand team's and consumers' ratings for these components (the lower the score the greater the team-consumer congruency)			
Brand personality (scale)	10	0.58	0.16
Brand values	10	0.63	0.12
Staff-consumer relationship	10	1.20	0.25

The following hypothesis was tested:

H8: The greater the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity, the greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity.

A significant correlation was obtained between the summary measure of team-staff congruency about the brand's identity and the summary measure of team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity[1] ($r=0.743$; $N=10$; $p=0.014$). The greater the team-staff congruency about the brand's identity (i.e. the higher the score), the greater was the team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity (i.e. the higher the score).

However, no support for this hypothesis was found for the individual congruency variables. There were no significant correlations for any of the individual brand identity components between the congruency of brand perceptions between the brand team and consumer-facing staff[2] and the congruency of brand perceptions between the brand team and consumers[3].

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[1] The summary measures of team-staff and team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity components summarised congruency about the following brand identity components that were assessed across all three stakeholder groups: purpose, goal, envisioned future, role to achieve the brand's envisioned future, positioning, brand values, brand personality and staff-consumer relationship. The calculation of the summary measures of congruency about these components of a brand's identity was described in Section 4.4.3.

[2] Team-staff congruency was measured as: the mean staff agreement with: the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses for the identity components 'purpose', 'goal', 'envisioned future', 'role' and 'positioning'; and the absolute difference score of the mean brand team and mean staff ratings for each scale item, squared, summed across items, meaned and square rooted for the identity components 'brand personality', 'brand values', 'organisational values', 'team-staff relationship' and 'staff-consumer relationship'.

[3] Team-consumer congruency was measured as: the mean consumer agreement with: the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses for the identity components 'purpose', 'goal', 'envisioned future', 'role' and 'positioning'; and the absolute difference score of the mean brand team and mean consumer ratings for each scale item, squared, summed across items, meaned and square rooted for the identity components 'brand personality', 'brand values' and 'staff-consumer relationship'.

Nevertheless, the result of the analysis with summary measures of congruency is consistent with the literature (e.g. Schneider and Bowen, 1985; Balmer and Wilkinson, 1991) in indicating that staff have an important impact on consumers' brand perceptions.

8.3 The effects of staff-consumer communication on team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity

Communication between consumer-facing staff and consumers (the mean of the consumers' mean frequencies of face-to-face meetings, written communication (letters), e-mail, faxes and telephone communication) was analysed using consumers' ratings, since these were considered to provide the more accurate reflection of the level of consumers' contact with staff. By the very nature of their jobs, consumer-facing staff would report frequent contact with consumers.

Descriptive statistics for the staff-consumer communication variables are shown in Table 10. The descriptive statistics for the team-consumer congruency were shown in Table 9 in Section 8.2.

The hypothesis tested in this section of the model was:

H9: The more frequent the staff-consumer communication, the greater the team consumer congruency about the brand's identity.

There was no significant correlation between the overall mean frequency of staff-consumer communication and the summary measure of team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity[4] ($r=0.431$; $N=10$; $p=0.214$).

Table 10. Descriptive statistics for consumers' mean ratings of staff-consumer communication (all variables were measured on 6 point scales with verbal anchors: 0=Never; 1=Very Infrequently; 5=Very Frequently)

Staff-consumer communication	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Face-to-face	10	1.30	1.21
Written (letters)	10	1.90	0.34
E-mail	10	0.27	0.41
Faxes	10	0.29	0.39
Telephone conversations	10	1.82	0.51
Summary measures of staff-consumer communication	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Overall mean staff-consumer communication	10	1.12	0.42
Mean frequency of direct staff-consumer communication	10	1.56	0.70
Mean frequency of indirect staff-consumer communication	10	0.82	0.33

Of the individual congruency variables, only one significant correlation was obtained between the frequency of staff-consumer communication and team-consumer congruency

[4] The summary measure of team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity components summarised congruency about the following brand identity components that were assessed across all three stakeholder groups: purpose, goal, envisioned future, role to achieve the brand's envisioned future, positioning, brand values, brand personality and staff-consumer relationship. The calculation of the summary measures of congruency about these components of a brand's identity was described in Section 4.4.3.

about the brand's identity: for the brand identity component the role to achieve the brand's envisioned future (the mean staff agreement with the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses) ($r=0.722$; $N=10$; $p=0.018$). The greater the frequency of staff-consumer communication (i.e. the higher the score), the greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's role to achieve the envisioned future (i.e. the higher the score).

Additional analyses: the effects of types of staff-consumer communication on team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity

There were no significant correlations between the summary measure of team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity and the mean frequency of *direct*[5] staff-consumer communication ($r=0.508$; $N=10$; $p=0.134$) and the mean frequency of *indirect*[6] staff-consumer communication ($r=0.206$; $N=10$; $p=0.567$).

With regard to the individual congruency variables, *direct* staff-consumer communication was significantly correlated with team-consumer congruency about the brand's goal (the mean staff agreement with the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses) ($r=0.693$; $N=10$; $p=0.026$) and with team-consumer congruency about the brand's role to achieve its envisioned future (the mean staff agreement with the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses) ($r=0.721$; $N=10$; $p=0.019$). The more frequent the direct communication between staff and consumers (i.e. the higher the score), the greater the congruency between the brand team and consumers about the brand's goal (i.e. the higher the score) and the brand's role to achieve its envisioned future (i.e. the higher the score).

[5] *Direct* staff-consumer communication was the mean of the consumers' mean frequencies of face-to-face and telephone communication.
[6] *Indirect* staff-consumer communication was the mean of the consumers' mean frequencies of written, e-mail and fax communication.

No significant correlations were found between *indirect* staff-consumer communication and team-consumer congruency about any of the brand's identity components (the mean consumer agreement with: the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses for the identity components 'purpose', 'goal', 'envisioned future', 'role' and 'positioning'; and the absolute difference score of the mean brand team and mean staff ratings for each scale item, squared, summed across items, meaned and square rooted for the identity components 'brand values', 'organisational values', 'staff-team relationship' and 'staff-consumer relationship').

Thus in contrast to Study 2, there was evidence that direct communication between staff and consumers facilitated the congruency between the brand team's and consumers' perceptions of the brand's identity.

8.4 The effects of team-consumer communication on team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity

Communication between the brand team and consumers was analysed using the brand team's ratings, since these were considered to provide the more accurate reflection of the frequency brand team members' contact with consumers.

Descriptive statistics for the brand team's ratings' of the team-consumer communication variables are shown in Table 11. The descriptive statistics for team-consumer congruency were shown in Table 9 in Section 8.2.

The following hypothesis was tested in this section of the model:

H10: The more frequent the brand team's communication with consumers, the greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity.

There was no significant correlation between the overall mean frequency of the brand team's communication with consumers and the summary measure of team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity[7] ($r = -0.275$; $N=10$; $p=0.441$).

Table 11. Descriptive statistics for the brand team's mean ratings of team-consumer communication (all variables were measured on 6 point scales with verbal anchors: 0=Never; 1=Very Infrequently; 5=Very Frequently)

Team-consumer communication	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Face-to-face	12	0.98	0.76
Written (letters)	12	1.87	0.77
E-mail	12	0.81	0.53
Faxes	12	0.71	0.47
Telephone conversations	12	1.78	0.73
Summary measure of team-consumer communication	**N**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Overall mean team-consumer communication	12	1.23	0.52

[7] The summary measure of team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity components summarised congruency about the following brand identity components that were assessed across all three stakeholder groups: purpose, goal, envisioned future, role to achieve the brand's envisioned future, positioning, brand values, brand personality and staff-consumer relationship. The calculation of the summary measures of congruency about these components of a brand's identity was described in Section 4.4.3.

With regard to the individual congruency variables, significant correlations were found between the overall mean frequency of team-consumer communication (as assessed by the brand team) and team-consumer congruency about the brand's goal (the mean consumer agreement with: the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses) ($r = -0.632$; $N=10$; $p=0.050$) and the brand's role to achieve its envisioned future (the mean consumer agreement with: the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses) ($r = -0.713$; $N=10$; $p=0.021$). However, the direction of the relationships was the opposite of that hypothesised. The more frequent the team-consumer communication (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were the brand team's and consumers' perceptions about the brand's goal (i.e. the lower the score) and the brand's role to achieve its envisioned future (i.e. the lower the score).

No explanation for these unexpected findings could be discerned. The frequency of communication between brand teams and their consumers was not high, the mean frequencies ranging between 0.56 and 2.57 on a 5-point scale on which 0=never and 5=very frequently. However, it does imply that brand teams are not using the limited contact they do have with consumers to inform their branding activities.

8.5 The effects of team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity on consumer-based brand performance

The following hypothesis was tested in this section of the model:

H11: The greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity, the better the consumer-based brand performance

This corresponds to de Chernatony's hypothesis H_c cited in Chapter 3 (Section 3.2).

There was no significant correlation between the summary measure of team-consumer congruency[8] about the brand's identity and consumer-based brand performance[9] (r=0.381; N=10; p=0.277).

Of the individual congruency variables, only one significant correlation was obtained between team-consumer congruency about components of the brand's identity and consumer-based brand performance; this was for the brand's positioning (the mean consumer agreement with: the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses) (r=0.787; N=10; p=0.007). The greater the team-consumer congruency about the brand's positioning (i.e. the higher the score), the better the consumer-based brand performance (i.e. the higher the score).

A non-significant tendency was also observed for greater team-consumer congruency about the brand's purpose (the mean consumer agreement with: the brand's statement derived from the brand team's responses) (i.e. the higher the score) to be associated with better consumer-based brand performance (i.e. the higher the score) (r=0.588; N=10; p=0.074).

These results suggest limited support for de Chernatony's hypothesis H_c.

[8] The summary measure of team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity components summarised congruency about the following brand identity components that were assessed across all three stakeholder groups: purpose, goal, envisioned future, role to achieve the brand's envisioned future, positioning, brand values, brand personality and staff-consumer relationship. The calculation of the summary measures of congruency about these components of a brand's identity was described in Section 4.4.3.

[9] Consumer-based brand performance was assessed using the single factor combined measure described in Section 4.5.

8.6 The effects of consumer-based brand performance on business-based brand performance

This section of the model tested the hypothesis:

H12: The better the consumer-based brand performance, the better the business-based brand performance.

Only one significant correlation was found between the combined consumer-based measure of brand performance and the different business-based measures of performance (data from the FAME database for: profit (loss) before taxation for 1999; return on capital employed (ROCE) for 1999; return on shareholder funds for 1999; sales for 1999; and increase in sales 1998-99). This was for the increase in sales from 1998 to 1999 ($r=0.912$; $N=10$; $p=0.004$). The better the combined consumer-based brand performance (i.e. the higher the score), the greater the increase in sales from 1998 to 1999 (i.e. the higher the score).

This finding is not wholly unexpected, given that business-based measures are subject to non-brand-related influences.

8.7 Summary of results from Study 3: Consumers

Overall, only limited support was found for relationships between variables in the section of the conceptual model covered by the consumer study. However, with the exception of the relationship between team-consumer communication and team-consumer congruency, the significant relationships that did occur were in the predicted direction. Furthermore, the summary measures of congruency indicated that greater team-staff congruency about the brand's identity was significantly associated with greater team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity. Consistent with the literature (e.g. Schneider and Bowen, 1985; Balmer and Wilkinson, 1991), this demonstrates that consumer-facing staff have a significant impact on consumers' brand perceptions.

CHAPTER 9: DIRECT EFFECTS OF BRAND TEAM COMPOSITION ON BRAND MANAGEMENT PERFORMANCE

9.1 Introduction

The focus of the research was testing the conceptual model and the hypotheses relating to the links in the model. However, owing to the lack of empirical research on intervening variables in the literature and because the research enabled additional quantitative analysis to be conducted, potential direct effects between some of the key variables in the model were also explored. The literature has tended to concentrate on the effects of team composition on consensus (comparable to team congruency about the brand's identity in the research) and performance. Pfeffer (1983) proposed that direct effects between top management team composition and organisational performance would still occur because it would not be possible to include all possible intervening process variables. Thus, while the relationship between brand team composition and performance was expected to be mediated by communication and shared values, this chapter reports the results of examining the direct effects of team composition on various stages of brand management performance. This facilitated comparison with the literature and enabled the impact of including the mediating variables in the conceptual model to be assessed.

As explained in Chapter 3, brand management performance was conceptualised as encompassing various levels: the formulation of a brand's identity (brand team congruency); the internal implementation of the brand's identity (brand team-staff congruency); external implementation of the brand's identity (brand team-consumer congruency); and brand performance (in terms of consumer-based and business-based measures). However, in the analyses that follow brand management performance was assessed in terms of two key measures: the formulation of the brand's identity (team congruency about the brand's identity) and consumer-based brand performance, as illustrated in Figure 20. The formulation of the brand's identity by the brand team is the starting point of brand management, from which the subsequent internal and external implementation of the brand's identity emanate. Consumer-based brand performance is an outcome measure and may be considered the most objective measure of brand management performance (i.e. not necessarily dependent on the validity of the conceptual model) and less likely to be affected by non-brand related factors than business-based measures of brand performance.

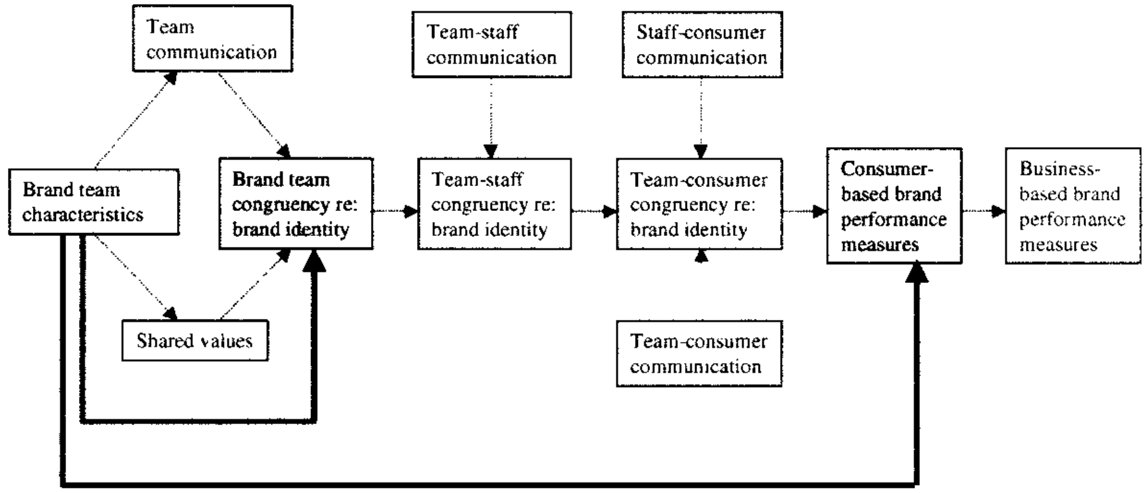

Figure 20. The direct effects of team composition on brand management performance

9.2 The effects of diversity in brand team members' characteristics on team congruency about the brand's identity

The implications from the literature were that greater similarity in team members' characteristics would be associated with greater congruency among brand team members about the brand's identity.

There was an almost significant correlation between the summary measure of team diversity[1] and the summary measure of team congruency[2] (r= -0.554; N=12; p=0.061). The more similar team members' characteristics (i.e. the lower the score), the more congruent were team members' perceptions of the brand's identity (i.e. the higher the score). This is consistent with the implications from the literature discussed in Section 3.16.2.

The results of the correlations between the individual team diversity variables and team congruency about the individual brand's identity components are reported separately for each team diversity variable.

Age diversity

A significant correlation was found between diversity in the age of brand team members (standard deviation) and the congruency of team members' perceptions about the brand's purpose (mean citations) (r= -0.686; N=12; p=0.014). The greater the diversity in the age of brand team members (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the brand's purpose (i.e. the lower the score).

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[1] The summary measure of team diversity summarised the following team diversity variables: gender diversity (Blau's Index); functional diversity (Blau's Index), functional background diversity (Blau's Index), educational diversity (Blau's Index), internal vs. external membership diversity (Blau's Index), geographical dispersion diversity (Blau's Index), age diversity (standard deviation), team tenure diversity (standard deviation), company tenure diversity (standard deviation) and industry tenure diversity (standard deviation). The calculation of the summary measure of team diversity was described in Section 4.4.3.

[2] The summary measure of team congruency about the brand's identity components summarised congruency about the following brand identity components that were assessed across all three stakeholder groups: purpose, goal, envisioned future, role to achieve the brand's envisioned future, positioning, brand values, brand personality and staff-consumer relationship. The calculation of the summary measures of congruency about these components of a brand's identity was described in Section 4.4.3.

Gender diversity

There were no significant correlations between the diversity in the gender of brand team members (as measured by Blau's Index and the percentage of males in the team) and team congruency about any of the components of their brand's identity (the mean citations for the open-ended question components: 'core values', 'purpose', 'goal', 'envisioned future', 'role', 'positioning' and 'brand personality'; and the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted for the scalar components: brand values, organisational values, brand personality, brand team relationship, team-staff relationship and ideal staff-consumer relationship).

Team tenure diversity

A significant correlation was found between diversity in the length of brand team tenure (standard deviation) and team members' perceptions about the relationship between brand team members (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) ($r=0.641$; $N=12$; $p=0.025$). The greater the diversity in the length of brand team tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the relationship between brand team members (i.e. the higher the score). When the business-to-business brand was omitted this correlation fell just short of significance ($r=0.575$; $N=11$; $p=0.064$), but the finding is still consistent with the result for the sample of 12 brands.

There was also a significant relationship between the diversity in the length of brand team tenure (standard deviation) and team members' perceptions about the team-staff relationship (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) ($r=0.672$; $N=12$; $p=0.017$). The greater the diversity in length of brand team tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the team-staff relationship (i.e. the higher the score).

Company tenure diversity

A significant correlation was obtained between diversity in the length of company tenure (standard deviation) and the congruency of team members' perceptions about the organisation's values (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) ($r=0.691$; $N=12$; $p=0.013$). The greater the diversity in the length of company tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the organisation's values (i.e. the higher the score).

When the business-to-business brand was omitted, there was also a significant correlation between diversity in the length of company tenure (standard deviation) and the congruency of team members' perceptions about the ideal staff-consumer relationship ($r=0.671$; $N=11$; $p=0.024$). The greater the diversity in company tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the ideal staff-consumer relationship (i.e. the higher the score).

Industry tenure diversity

Several significant correlations were obtained between diversity in the length of industry tenure and the congruency of brand team members' perceptions about the brand's identity.

Diversity in the length of industry tenure (standard deviation) and the congruency of team members' perceptions about their brand's personality (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) were significantly correlated (r=0.794; N=12; p=0.002). The greater the diversity in the length of industry tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about their brand's personality (i.e. the higher the score).

A significant correlation was found between diversity in the length of industry tenure (standard deviation) and the congruency of team members' perceptions about their brand's values (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) (r=0.606; N=12; p=0.037). The greater the diversity in the length of industry tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were brand team members' perceptions about their brand's values (i.e. the higher the score).

Diversity in the length of industry tenure (standard deviation) was also significantly correlated with the congruency of brand team members' perceptions about their organisation's values (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) (r=0.869; N=12; p=0.000). The greater the diversity in the length of industry tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were brand team members' perceptions about their organisation's values (i.e. the higher the score).

When the business-to-business brand was omitted two further correlations were significant. Diversity in the length of industry tenure (standard deviation) was significantly correlated with team congruency about the brand's envisioned future (mean citations) (r=0.625; N=11; p=0.040). The greater the team diversity in the length of industry tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the more congruent were team members' perceptions about the brand's envisioned future (i.e. the higher the score). When the business-to-business brand was omitted the correlation between diversity in the length of industry tenure (standard deviation) was also significantly correlated with team congruency about the ideal staff-consumer relationship (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) ($r=0.677$; $N=11$; $p=0.022$). The greater the diversity in the length of industry tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the ideal staff-consumer relationship (i.e. the higher the score).

Functional diversity

There was a significant correlation between functional diversity (assessed using Blau's Index) and the congruency of team members' perceptions about the brand's purpose (mean citations) ($r= -0.730$; $N=12$; $p=0.007$). The greater the functional diversity of brand team members (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent their perceptions about the brand's purpose (i.e. the lower the score).

A significant correlation was also obtained between functional diversity (assessed using Blau's Index) and the congruency of team members' perceptions about the relationship between brand team members (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) ($r=0.707$; $N=12$; $p=0.010$). The greater the functional diversity of brand team members (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent their perceptions about the relationship between brand team members (i.e. the higher the score).

Functional background diversity

Significant correlations were obtained between the diversity in functional background (assessed using Blau's Index) and the congruency of brand team members' perceptions of two brand identity components: the organisation's values (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) (r=0.593; N=12; p=0.042) and the relationship among brand team members (r=0.578; N=12; p=0.049). The greater the diversity in brand team members' functional background (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent their perceptions of the corporate values (i.e. the higher the score). The greater the diversity in brand team members' functional background (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent their perceptions of the relationship among brand team members (i.e. the higher the score).

When the business-to-business brand was omitted both correlations fell just short of significance. Diversity in functional background was almost significantly correlated with team congruency about the organisation's values (r=0.595; N=11; p=0.053). Similarly, diversity in functional background was almost significantly correlated with team congruency about the team relationship (r=0.538; N=11; p=0.087). However, in both cases, the difference was very small and probably attributable to the smaller sample size, given that the r value actually increased in the first case and was very similar in the second.

In addition, when the business-to-business brand was omitted there were two further significant correlations. Functional background diversity (Blau's Index) was significantly correlated with team congruency about the brand's values (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) (r=0.712; N=11; p=0.014). The greater the functional background diversity (Blau's Index) (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the brand's values (i.e. the higher the score). There was also a significant correlation between functional background diversity and team congruency about the ideal staff-consumer relationship (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) (r=0.691; N=11; p=0.019). The greater the functional background diversity (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the ideal staff-consumer relationship (i.e. the higher the score).

Educational diversity

There were no significant correlations between educational diversity (as assessed using Blau's Index) and the congruency of brand team members' perceptions about any of their brand's identity components (the mean citations for the open-ended question components: 'core values', 'purpose', 'goal', 'envisioned future', 'role', 'positioning' and 'brand personality'; and the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted for the scalar components: brand values, organisational values, brand personality, brand team relationship, team-staff relationship and ideal staff-consumer relationship).

Internal vs. external membership

A significant correlation was obtained between team diversity with regard to internal vs. external membership (as measured by Blau's Index) and the congruency of team members' perceptions about the brand's purpose (mean citations) ($r= -0.629$; $N=12$; $p=0.028$). The greater the diversity in internal vs. external team membership (assessed using Blau's Index) (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the brand's purpose (i.e. the lower the score).

There was an almost significant correlation between team diversity with regard to internal vs. external membership (as measured by Blau's Index) and the congruency of team members' perceptions about the brand's positioning (mean citations) ($r= -0.533$; $N=12$; $p=0.075$). The greater the diversity with regard to internal vs. external membership (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the brand's positioning (i.e. the lower the score).

There was also a significant correlation between the percentage of external members in the full brand team and the congruency of team members' perceptions about the brand's purpose (mean citations) ($r= -0.576$; $N=12$; $p=0.05$). The larger the percentage of external brand team members (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the brand's purpose (i.e. the lower the score).

In addition, there was an almost significant correlation between the percentage of external brand team members in the full team and the congruency of team members' perceptions about the brand's positioning (mean citations) ($r= -0.549$; $N=12$; $p=0.064$). The higher the percentage of external members (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the brand's positioning (the lower the score).

Geographic dispersion

No significant correlations were found between the brand team diversity in geographical location (Blau's Index) and the congruency of team members' perceptions about any of their brand's identity components (the mean citations for the open-ended question components: 'core values', 'purpose', 'goal', 'envisioned future', 'role', 'positioning' and 'brand personality'; and the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted for the scalar components: brand values, organisational values, brand personality, brand team relationship, team-staff relationship and ideal staff-consumer relationship).

These findings consistently indicate that team diversity is associated with less congruent perceptions about the brand's identity. They also concur with the implications from the literature that the more similar a brand team's characteristics, the greater should be the congruency of brand team members' perceptions about the brand's identity.

9.3 The effects of diversity in brand team members' characteristics on consumer-based brand performance

The literature on team effects of diversity and similarity in team characteristics implied that if teams with diverse characteristics were able to overcome the potential difficulties in communication and differences in values, they might be able to benefit from their diversity and achieve ultimately better brand performance. Thus it was expected that greater team diversity in brand team members' characteristics would be associated with better consumer-based brand performance.

However, there was no significant correlation between the summary measure of team diversity and the combined measure of consumer-based brand performance[3] ($r = -0.205$; $N=10$; $p=0.569$). There were also no significant correlations between any of the individual team diversity variables and the combined measure of consumer-based brand performance, as shown in Table 12.

[3] Consumer-based brand performance was assessed using the single factor combined measure described in Section 4.5.

Table 12. Correlations between diversity in brand team members' characteristics and the combined measure of consumer-based brand performance

Diversity variables correlated with the combined measure of consumer-based brand performance	**r value**	**N**	**Significance (p value)**
Gender (Blau's Index)	-0.473	10	0.167
Age (standard deviation)	-0.146	10	0.688
Internal vs. external membership (Blau's Index)	-0.138	10	0.704
Function (Blau's Index)	-0.123	10	0.734
Functional background (Blau's Index)	0.74	10	0.839
Education (Blau's Index)	0.133	10	0.715
Geographical dispersion (Blau's Index)	-0.069	10	0.850
Team tenure (standard deviation)	-0.261	10	0.466
Company tenure (standard deviation)	0.036	10	0.921
Industry tenure (standard deviation)	0.041	10	0.910

Williams and O'Reilly (1998) and Wiersema and Bantel (1992) suggested that there would be a curvilinear relationship between brand team diversity and brand performance. Curvilinear regression analyses were therefore also performed for the summary measure of team diversity and each of the team diversity variables against the combined measure of consumer-based brand performance. A positive constant (equal to the largest value for a brand's combined measure of consumer-based brand performance) was added to the combined measure of consumer-based brand performance values. The literature indicated that the curvilinear relationship would be quadratic: small and high levels of team diversity would be associated with poorer performance.

No evidence of a curvilinear relationship between any of the team diversity variables and brand performance was found, as illustrated in Table 13. The absence of any significant relationships might result from the small number of companies. Another contributory factor might be that the analyses were heavily influenced by the brand performance of one particular company (not the business-to-business brand). It is not possible to draw any firm conclusions about the nature of any relationship between team diversity and brand performance.

Table 13. Curvilinear quadratic correlations between the diversity in team member's characteristics and the combined measure of consumer-based brand performance.

Diversity variables correlated with the combined measure of consumer-based brand performance	**Degrees of Freedom**	**F value**	**Significance (p value)**
Summary measure of team diversity	7	0.42	0.671
Gender (Blau's Index)	7	1.19	0.359
Age (standard deviation)	7	1.06	0.398
Internal vs. external membership (Blau's Index)	7	0.22	0.811
Function (Blau's Index)	7	0.30	0.752
Functional background (Blau's Index)	7	1.05	0.399
Education (Blau's Index)	7	1.00	0.414
Geographical dispersion (Blau's Index)	7	0.11	0.896
Team tenure (standard deviation)	7	0.30	0.752
Company tenure (standard deviation)	7	0.36	0.707
Industry tenure (standard deviation)	7	0.04	0.962

9.4 The effects of mean brand team tenure on team congruency about the brand's identity

In view of the weakening in the effects of demographic diversity over time (Harrison, Price and Bell, 1998), the increasing similarity in attitudes over time (Jackson, 1992) and the improvement of group processes over time (Watson, Kumar and Michaelson, 1993), it was expected that longer mean brand team tenure would be associated with greater team congruency about the brand's identity.

There was no significant correlation between mean brand team tenure and the summary measure of team congruency about the brand's identity ($r= -0.269$; $N=12$; $p=0.397$).

With regard to the individual brand identity components, a significant correlation was obtained between the mean length of brand team tenure and team members' perceptions about the team-staff relationship (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) ($r=0.723$; $N=12$; $p=0.008$). The longer the mean brand team tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were team members' perceptions about the team-staff relationship (i.e. the higher the score).

There was a significant correlation between the mean length of brand team tenure and team members' perceptions about the brand's personality (open-ended question[4] – mean citations) ($r= -0.602$; $N=11$; $p=0.050$). The longer the mean brand team tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent were brand team members' perceptions about the brand's personality (i.e. the lower the score).

[4] The open-ended question used to explore brand team members' unprompted perceptions about the brand's personality was added after the first organisation had been sent brand team questionnaires, so the sample size for this question was 11 rather than 12.

There was also a significant correlation between the mean length of brand team tenure and team members' perceptions about the relationship between brand team members (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) (r=0.589; N=12; p=0.044). The longer the mean brand team tenure (i.e. the higher the score), the less congruent team members' perceptions about the relationship between brand team members (i.e. the higher the score). However, when the business-to-business brand was omitted this correlation was not significant (r=0.495; N=11; p=0.121).

As the mean team tenures of brand teams in the study ranged between 1.35 and 7.28 years (overall mean = 4.07 years and standard deviation = 2.13 years), there should have been sufficient time for brand teams to develop congruent perceptions about the brand's identity. There is thus no support for the hypothesis that team congruency improves as the length of team tenure increases. A possible explanation is that longer-tenure brand teams are less up-to-date about branding issues and perhaps have not developed an identity for their brand.

9.5 The effects of mean brand team tenure on consumer-based brand performance

It has been proposed in the literature that longer-tenured teams have a restricted knowledge base (Hambrick and Mason, 1984), are less receptive to new information (Katz, 1982) and tend to adhere to the status quo (Alutto and Hrebiniak, 1975; Stevens, Beyer and Trice, 1978). This implied that the formulation of a brand's identity by longer-tenured brand teams might be less adaptive to consumers' changing needs. Longer-tenured brand teams were therefore expected to be associated with poorer consumer-based brand performance.

However, the correlation between mean team tenure and the combined measure of consumer-based brand performance was not significant (r=0.048; N=10; p=0.896).

Katz (1982) and Pfeffer (1983) suggested that the relationship between team tenure and performance was curvilinear. A curvilinear regression analysis was therefore performed between mean team tenure and the combined measure of consumer-based brand performance. A positive constant (equal to the largest value for a brand's combined measure of consumer-based brand performance) was added to the combined measure of consumer-based brand performance values. The literature indicated that the curvilinear relationship would be quadratic: short- and long-tenured teams would be associated with poorer performance. However, no significant curvilinear relationship between mean team tenure and the combined measure of consumer-based brand performance was obtained (F=0.17; Degrees of Freedom=7; p=0.845). As with the curvilinear analyses between team diversity and brand performance, this might be attributable to the small number of companies or undue influence by the poor performance of one company.

9.6 The effects of mean brand team age on team congruency about the brand's identity

Goodyear (1996) suggested that younger teams would be more likely to appreciate the need for brand marketing than would an older generation whose views had been shaped by the time when it was a sellers' market. It was therefore expected that younger mean brand team age would be associated with greater team congruency about the brand's identity.

There was no significant correlation between mean brand team age and the summary measure of team congruency about the brand's identity (r= -0.406; N=12; p=0.191).

With regard to the individual brand identity components, mean team age was significantly correlated with team congruency about the relationship between brand team members (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) (r=0.648; N=12; p=0.023). The younger the mean team age (i.e. the lower the score), the greater the team congruency about the relationship between brand team members (i.e. lower the score). However, when the business-to-business brand was omitted this correlation was not significant (r=0.504; N=11; p=0.114).

A non-significant trend was noted between mean team age and team congruency about the brand's core values (mean citations) (r= -0.552; N=12; p=0.063). The younger the mean team age (i.e. the lower the score), the greater the congruency about the brand's core values (i.e. the higher the score). When the business-to-business brand was omitted the correlation was significant (r= -0.664; N=11; p=0.026). This provides clearer support for a relationship between mean team age and team congruency about the brand's core values.

When the business-to-business brand was omitted an additional significant correlation was evident: mean team age was significantly correlated with team congruency about the brand's purpose (mean citations) (r= -0.606; N=11; p=0.048). The younger the mean team age (i.e. the lower the score), the more congruent were team members' perceptions about the brand's purpose (i.e. the higher the score).

These findings provide weak support for Goodyear's (1996) proposal that younger teams would be more likely to appreciate the need for branding marketing.

9.7 The effects of mean brand team age on consumer-based brand performance

The relationship between mean team age and brand performance was explored, as Goodyear (1996) had posited that not only would younger teams be more likely to appreciate the need for brand marketing than an older generation, but that younger teams would be more likely to put corporate survival before a personal sense of control. It was therefore expected that younger mean brand team age would be associated with better consumer-based brand performance. However, mean team age was not found to be significantly correlated with the combined measure of consumer-based brand performance ($r= -0.264$; $N=10$; $p=0.461$).

9.8 The effects of brand team size on team congruency about the brand's identity

The implications from the literature were that larger brand teams would be less likely to surface and resolve differing brand perceptions. It was therefore expected that larger brand teams would have less congruent perceptions about the brand's identity.

There was no significant correlation between the full brand team size and the summary measure of team congruency about the brand's identity ($r=0.221$; $N=12$; $p=0.490$).

Significant correlations were obtained between the full brand team size and the congruency of team members' perceptions about the brand's core values (mean citations) ($r=0.749$; $N=12$; $p=0.005$) and the team-staff relationship (the standard deviation of each scale item, squared, summed across items, divided by the mean and square rooted) ($r= -0.601$; $N=12$; $p=0.039$). The larger the full brand team size (i.e. the higher the score), the more congruent were brand team members' perceptions about the brand's core values (i.e. the higher the score). The larger the full brand team size (i.e. the higher the score), the more congruent were brand team members' perceptions about the team-staff relationship (i.e. the lower the score).

There was also a non-significant trend for larger full brand team size (i.e. the higher the score) to be associated with greater congruency about the brand's personality (open-ended question[5] – mean citations) (i.e. the higher the score) ($r=0.572$; $N=11$; $p=0.066$).

These findings are contrary to those predicted. As there was no obvious explanation for these results, the notes from the initial interviews with the brand contact in the participating companies were consulted to check whether the larger brand teams had perhaps initiated any branding activities that might account for the results. However, there was no evidence to this effect.

9.9 The effect of brand team size on consumer-based brand performance

Haleblian and Finkelstein (1993) reported that larger top management teams performed better in a turbulent environment. It was therefore expected that larger brand teams might be associated with better consumer-based brand performance in the financial services sector. However, there was no significant correlation between the full brand team size and the combined measure of consumer-based brand performance ($r= -0.029$; $N=10$; $p=0.936$).

[5] The open-ended question used to explore brand team members' unprompted perceptions about the brand's personality was added after the first organisation had been sent brand team questionnaires, so the sample size for this question is 11 rather than 12.

9.10 Summary

Although the number of significant correlations was comparatively small, all of these significant correlations were in the same direction. These findings consistently indicated that greater diversity (in age, team tenure, company tenure, industry tenure, function, functional background and internal vs. external membership) was associated with less congruent perceptions about the components of a brand's identity. The findings of significant direct effects between brand team diversity and team congruency suggest that the lack of support for the front section of the conceptual model in Chapters 5 and 6 might be attributable to a failure to identify the most appropriate intervening variables.

No support was found that increasing team tenure improved the congruency of brand team members' perceptions about the brand's identity.

There was weak evidence indicating that brand teams composed of younger members had more congruent perceptions about the brand's identity and were thus more aware of the need for brand marketing.

Contrary to expectation, large brand team size was associated with greater congruency in team members' perceptions about components of a brand's identity.

None of the direct correlations between brand team composition and consumer-based brand performance proved significant. While the small sample size at the brand level or undue influence by a single brand, particularly with the curvilinear correlations, may have prevented any significant direct effects from emerging, this would equally have been the case in the analyses relating to the conceptual model. It is thus tentatively suggested that, with the exception of the hypothesised intervening variables between team diversity and team congruency, the conceptual model may provide more explanatory power than omitting the intervening variables. In other words, the intervening variables in the later stages in the brand management process represented by the conceptual model help to provide a better picture of the factors affecting brand performance.

CHAPTER 10 DISCUSSION

10.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the contribution of the conceptual model in providing a framework for examining the impact of increasing brand team size and diversity on the process of brand management. It discusses the detailed findings from the three stakeholder studies in relation to the literature and the implications for brand management. Mechanisms for surfacing and harmonising brand perceptions that might be used to facilitate team processes and the need for internal brand communication programmes are examined. Finally, directions for future research are explored.

10.2 The contribution of the conceptual model

Path analyses of sections of the conceptual model indicated a lack of support for the path from team diversity through team communication and shared values to team congruency about the brand's identity. It is possible that the small number of brand teams studied might have been too small to uncover any effects. However, given that other paths with the same brand level case to variable ratio on different sections of the model revealed stronger relationships, the limited sample size does not seem a sufficient explanation for the results. Given the consistent indications in the detailed analyses of the links in this front section of the model that brand team diversity was associated with less congruent team perceptions about the brand's identity, the most likely explanation is that the hypothesised intervening variables were not correctly identified. Other aspects of team communication than those examined in the research might be of greater relevance. For example, the content or quality of team communication might be more important than the frequency and type. Alternatively, other potential intervening variables such as the presence and nature of team conflict or team cohesion might play a role. It is also possible that the sophistication of brand team members' knowledge of current branding issues or training might affect the extent to which the team have elaborated their formulation of their brand's identity and hence the congruency of team members' perceptions about it. If brand team members are not particularly up to date with current branding issues and so do not have a clearly formulated brand identity, the level of team congruency about the brand's identity may be low irrespective of the team's demographic characteristics and communication.

Some aspect or aspects of communication must play a role in the formation of congruent brand perceptions among brand team members. However, as proposed above, perhaps other aspects than those examined in this research are more important for team members to reach agreement about the components of their brand's identity. Communication might also affect the congruency of team members' brand perceptions in conjunction with other factors, such as the sophistication of members' brand knowledge. It seems less likely though that shared values play an important role in the formation of congruent brand perceptions.

The path from team congruency to team-staff congruency to team-consumer congruency to consumer-based brand performance was supported. This is consistent with the literature (cf Keller, 1999a) in reinforcing the need for all stakeholder groups to have a correct understanding of the brand, and in particular congruent perceptions about a brand's identity. It also provides evidence that congruent brand perceptions between stakeholder groups have a positive impact on consumer-based brand performance.

There was also support for the path from team-staff communication to team-staff congruency to team-consumer congruency. However, the indication that the frequency of team-staff communication was negatively related to team-staff congruency about the brand's identity was contrary to expectations. Given that greater congruency between the brand members about the brand's identity led to greater team-staff congruency about the brand's identity, the implication is that consumer-facing staff derived their brand perceptions through some other means than communication with the brand team. It also suggests existing team-staff communication was not effective and is an area requiring further investigation. A possible explanation for the negative relationship between team-staff communication and team-staff congruency is that a higher level of overt team-staff communication is indicative of a brand requiring attention. Furthermore, perhaps brands with better-developed identities are communicated implicitly through some other means, such as policies or features associated with the brand, managers' actions or the organisation's culture.

The path from staff-consumer communication to team-consumer congruency to consumer-based brand performance was not a good fit. The results indicated that there was also an unmediated correlation between the overall mean frequency of staff-consumer communication and consumer-based brand performance. Although the individual correlation between the latter two variables was not significant, the individual correlations between the overall mean frequency and mean frequency of direct staff-consumer communication indicated that greater staff-consumer communication was associated with greater team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity. These findings imply that consumer-facing staff have a positive impact on consumer-based brand performance through potentially both their communication of the brand's identity to consumers and some other (unidentified) aspect of staff's communication with consumers (perhaps the quality of staff-consumer communication). Nevertheless, this emphasises the vital role that consumer-facing staff play in the communication of the brand to consumers and the translation of consumers' brand perceptions into consumer-based brand performance.

The small sample size of companies prevented conclusive conclusions being drawn about the goodness of fit of the overall conceptual model. However, the existence of some degree of support from the analyses of sections of the model and the lack of significant direct correlations between team composition and consumer-based brand performance suggest that the model provides better explanatory power than omitting the intervening variables, with the exception of the hypothesised intervening variables between team diversity and team congruency about the brand's identity. The conceptual model may therefore be tentatively considered a framework worthy of further exploration, albeit with modifications to the front end of the model.

The next section reflects on results of the detailed analyses of the individual links between the variables in the conceptual model.

10.3 Review of the detailed research findings

Consistent with Wiersema and Bantel (1992)'s prediction that group size would affect the level of demographic diversity, larger brand teams were found to be composed of members from significantly more diverse functional backgrounds. This provides evidence that the increasing size of the brand team under corporate branding is widening the range of skills, knowledge and information potentially available to the brand team. However, larger brand team size did not significantly increase the diversity of any other characteristics of brand team members. In addition, the significant relationship between brand team size and the diversity of team members' functional backgrounds was heavily influenced by the business-to-business brand.

Nevertheless, there was consistent evidence that team diversity with regard to a range of composition variables (diversity in age, length of team tenure, length of company tenure, length of industry tenure, function, functional background and internal vs. external membership) was associated with less congruent perceptions among brand team members about the brand's identity. These findings are consistent with the predictions of social categorisation and similarity/attraction paradigms rather than those of the information/decision-making paradigm. Similarity between brand team members facilitated congruent brand team perceptions. By contrast, teams composed of members with diverse characteristics were apparently unable to take advantage of the wider range of knowledge and skills potentially available to them, instead revealing less congruent perceptions about their brand's identity. This suggests that brand teams with diverse characteristics need to employ mechanisms for increasing the congruency of their brand perceptions. Mechanisms that brand teams might wish to consider trying are discussed in the next section.

There was some indication that brand teams composed of younger members had more congruent perceptions about the brand's identity. This is consistent with Goodyear's (1996) proposition that younger teams were more likely to appreciate the need for brand marketing than an older generation whose views had been formed when brand evolution was less sophisticated. It also concurs with the view that brand marketing is a comparatively recent development in financial services (Colgate, 2000) in that older team members who have worked in the financial services industry for longer appear to have less well-developed formulations of their brand's identity.

Contrary to the predictions from the literature of the effects of time weakening demographic diversity (Harrison, Price and Bell, 1998), increasing attitude similarity (Jackson, 1992) and improving group processes (Watson, Kumar and Michaelson, 1993), but consistent with the above supposition, there was evidence that longer-tenured brand teams have less congruent perceptions about their brand's identity. This finding accords with the explanation that longer-tenured brand teams are less up-to-date about branding issues and may not have formulated a well-developed identity for their brand.

Contrary to the reports in the literature (e.g. March and Simon, 1958; Lichtenstein et al., 1997; Chatman et al., 1998), team diversity did not appear to impair team communication. The reason for this is unclear. As the frequency and type of team communication does not appear to have been identified correctly in the conceptual model as the key aspects of communication mediating the relationship between team diversity and team congruency, perhaps team diversity would be more likely to impair other more important aspects of communication, such as its content. However, consistent with Iaquinto and Fredrickson (1997), there were indications that larger brand team size reduced the frequency of team communication. This would be a cause for concern in view of the increasing size of brand teams under corporate branding, except that the frequency of team communication was not found to be significantly related to the congruency of team members' perceptions and when checking that team size did not bias the measures of team congruency, larger teams actually demonstrated greater congruency for a few components of brand identity. Conversely, team diversity with regard to the length of brand team tenure was associated with greater formality in team communication, while brand team size was not. The former concurs with the findings of Smith et al. (1994) that team diversity with regard to experience (a combination of length of industry tenure and length of company tenure) was negatively correlated with the informality of top team communication. However, the research failed to replicate Smith et al.'s (1994) finding that team size was also negatively related to the informality of team communication. Smith et al. attributed their latter finding to the likelihood that members of larger teams found it more difficult to get along and therefore resorted to more formal communication. The absence of a similar finding in the current research might be attributable to the fact that team size was only significantly correlated with one aspect of diversity: functional background. Perhaps, therefore, team members of larger brand teams were similar enough on other characteristics to enable them to get along with each other.

No support was found for arguments in the literature that frequent communication facilitates congruent perceptions (e.g. Wagner, Pfeffer and O'Reilly, 1984). However, there was some evidence that indirect team communication was associated with less congruent team perceptions about the brand's identity, although there was only a very weak suggestion that direct team communication facilitated more congruent team perceptions. There was also only weak support for the posited relationship (cf Grinyer and Norburn, 1975; Chatman et al., 1998; Kraut et al., 1990) between informal team communication and greater team congruency about the brand's identity. However, as discussed in Section 9.2, it seems likely that the aspects of communication examined in the research were not the most pertinent or that other intervening variables might have mediated the relationship between team diversity and team congruency about the brand's identity.

While little evidence was found that team diversity reduced the level of shared values among team members and no evidence for an association between team size and shared values, longer team tenure was significantly related to a greater extent of shared values. The latter finding is consistent with reports in the literature that team turnover is higher among more dissimilar members (Wagner, Pfeffer and O'Reilly, 1984) and that members tend to be attracted to similar others and recruit similar members (Schneider, 1987).

However, the effects of shared values on team congruency about the brand's identity were inconclusive. As with team communication, it is possible that other intervening variables not included in the research might have been more important in mediating the relationship between brand team diversity and team congruency about the brand's identity.

The lack of significant findings relating to the effects of team congruency and team-staff communication on team-staff congruency about the brand's identity do not concur with the results of the path analyses. It is possible that the summary measures used in the path analyses provided a better overall picture than the separate correlations between individual variables. However, as discussed in Section 9.2, the unexpected relationship revealed in Path Analysis 5 (the negative relationship between team-staff communication and team-staff congruency) suggests that internal communication regarding the brand's identity is an area that requires greater attention, both by financial services organisations themselves and through further research. Financial services organisations need to ensure that their communication with staff about the brand is effective and engages staff. Care should be taken to avoid inappropriate approaches that alienate staff, as the case study of a company's brand repositioning through threat rather than persuasion reported by Ogbonna and Harris (1998) demonstrated. Further research is needed to explore the possibility that the association between frequent team-staff communication and less congruent team-staff brand perceptions is an indication of a brand requiring attention and hence an expression of a brand team attempting to implement brand improvements.

There was some evidence, although not substantial, that communication between staff and consumers, particularly *direct* communication, facilitated greater consumer congruency with the brand team's perceptions of the brand's identity. These findings are consistent with the reports in the literature that consumer-facing staff influence consumers' perceptions (Hartline and Ferrell, 1996; Balmer and Wilkinson, 1991; Schneider and

Bowen, 1985). They also highlight the role of staff in representing the corporate brand to consumers (cf Hansen, 1972).

By contrast, team-consumer contact was associated with less congruent team-consumer perceptions about the brand's identity. Brand teams reported that their communication with consumers was infrequent. The findings imply that brand team members need to increase their level of contact with consumers and use it to inform their branding activities to achieve a better match between their formulation of the brand's identity and consumers' perceptions and identification with the brand's identity.

The brand team's and staff's perceptions about the direction of team-staff communication differed significantly; the brand team were more likely to consider the team-staff communication two-way than were staff. This made it difficult to assess accurately the extent to which team-staff communication was two-way and its impact on the congruency of perceptions between the team and staff. Possible explanations for the differences between brand team members' and staff's perceptions about the extent of two-way team-staff communication include: overestimation by brand team members; a lower level of awareness of team-staff communication by staff; or staff perceiving a lack or an apparent lack of the brand team's acting on feedback from staff about the brand. Further research might explore this issue by asking both brand team members and staff to give specific examples of when two-way communication has occurred and how it was demonstrated. This should help to identify the cause of the discrepancy, as well as to obtain more accurate data about the extent to which team-staff communication is two-way. Nevertheless, the findings suggest that more explicit mechanisms need to be put in place to benefit from both the brand team's and staff's knowledge of the brand and its consumers.

Contrary to the results of Path Analysis 4, there was only one significant relationship in the detailed links between the stakeholder groups' congruency with the team's perceptions of the brand's identity. This was between the summary measures of team-staff and team-consumer congruency about the brand's identity. However, the correlation between team-staff and team-consumer congruency was higher than the correlation between brand team and team-staff congruency in Path Analysis 4 anyway. So the results of the detailed analyses do broadly concur with those of the path analysis. It does imply though that the summary congruency variables provided a better overall picture than the separate correlations between the variables relating to the individual components of the brand's identity. Consistent with the literature (e.g. Balmer and Wilkinson, 1991; Schneider and Bowen, 1985) these results demonstrate the important impact that staff have on consumers' brand perceptions and reinforce the need to ensure that staff understand the brand's identity as the brand team intended (cf Keller, 1999a).

The only significant relationship detected between consumer-based brand performance and business-based brand performance was for the increase in sales. The lack of association with other business-based measures was not wholly unexpected, given that they are subject to non-brand-related influences. A change in sales, however, was a measure predicted to be more closely related to effects of the corporate brand. These findings emphasise the importance of monitoring both consumer-based and business-based measures of brand performance, as reliance on the latter will not provide accurate insight into brand performance on their own.

The principal implication from the research was that greater attention needs to be paid to facilitating processes within the brand team to address the negative impact of diversity on team congruency and to internal brand communication activities. Mechanisms for harmonising perceptions about the brand's identity internally and areas for future research are addressed in the following two sections.

10.4 Mechanisms for facilitating team processes and internal branding

The research did not reveal any support for the prediction of the information/decision-making paradigm that diversity would have a positive effect on performance owing to the increased range of skills and information available to the team. However, it is still possible that this paradigm might be correct if diverse teams are able to employ mechanisms that enable them to take advantage of their range of expertise. Several mechanisms have been discussed in the literature that brand teams might use to surface and harmonise their perceptions about their brand's identity. These will now be reviewed.

One approach is to use an independent facilitator (de Chernatony and Daniels, 1994). The facilitator collates team members' anonymous, individual brand perceptions and then leads a workshop in which the range of perceptions are discussed and a consensus reached regarding each of the brand identity components. This approach allows diverse views to be debated openly, with the facilitator ensuring they are each given due consideration. The facilitator, as an impartial co-ordinator, reduces the potential for conflict and prevents domination by any team members. Heterogeneous teams should find this approach particularly beneficial.

Two techniques used in strategic decision making to assist the expression and resolution of perceptions are dialectical inquiry (DI) and devil's advocacy (DA) (Schweiger, Sandberg and Ragan, 1986). DI involves inducing maximal conflict by requiring a team to debate two opposing views. DA induces conflict through the consideration and critique of one view. These techniques may be used by heterogeneous brand teams to legitimise and manage conflicting views about the nature of the brand. They should thus maximise the benefits of team diversity and result in greater consensus by allowing conflicting perceptions to be expressed and resolved (cf. Priem, Harrison and Muir, 1995). By forcing wider debate, these techniques may also be used by homogeneous brand teams to counteract the possibility of groupthink (cf. Janis, 1972).

A powerful device for creating a coherent focus among large numbers of individuals engaged in the development of a common concept was described by Dumas (1994) in relation to design. Dumas (1994) advocated the use of object-based metaphors called 'totems' to build shared mental models. Totems may consist of visual photographs or images and a set of words, and provide a gestalt that makes explicit the collective tacit knowledge of a team of individuals from a range of functional backgrounds. Examples include 'tall boy' as a metaphor for the Honda 'City' (Clark and Fujimoto, 1990) and 'rugby player in a business suit' for the Honda 'Accord' (Nonaka, 1991). Although Dumas (1994) described the use of totems by design teams developing new products, the process may be used by brand teams as a simplifying and unifying device to reflect de Chernatony's (1999) six brand identity components. The brand team could then use a totem to help communicate a brand's identity to employees and guide their behaviour accordingly.

To gain employees' commitment to a brand's identity it is important to establish staff communication programmes. Internal organisational communication is crucial for providing and obtaining information, achieving understanding and gaining employees' commitment (Gilly and Woolfinbarger, 1998). Employees need to know what is expected of them and how they can contribute to the brand's identity through their behaviour. For example, BUPA and Great North Eastern Railway have introduced internal programmes to inform employees about their brand values and involve them in acting as 'ambassadors' for their brands (Mistry, 1998; Wilson, 1998). Involvement facilitates understanding and consensus (Maier, 1967; Wooldridge and Floyd, 1990). It is therefore important that employees are actively involved in the process of building a brand's identity.

10.5 Directions for future research

The research provided a broad overview by considering internal factors hypothesised to affect brand performance and through the collection of data from three different stakeholder groups. It demonstrated how, methodologically, quantitative data could be collected to explore empirically hypothesised relationships between factors. However, maintaining the scope of the research and increasing the sample size of companies involved might prove difficult. Future research might more profitably use a larger sample of companies to focus on sections of the model in isolation. This should enable any effects to be more readily discerned. The research provides a benchmark that may be used to explore in greater detail particular aspects of this complex, multifaceted area.

Future research might also examine other potential intervening variables. For example, diverse teams are more prone to conflict (Lichenstein et al., 1997), which may impair group processes and performance. Yet, healthy conflict may be beneficial (Eisenhardt, Kahwajy and Bourgeois, 1997; Wagner, Pfeffer and O'Reilly, 1984). The nature and resolution of team conflict might therefore be valuable avenues for future research. As already suggested, other communication variables might also be examined. The research focused on the frequency and form of communication, based on the work of Smith et al. (1994) to which the research bore the closest similarity. However, the content of the communication and team dynamics are also expected to be important, and for which a qualitative approach might be more suited.

Examination of internal brand communication programmes is another important area for future research. This might be best undertaken as case studies, examining staff's understanding of the corporate brand before and after the programmes are conducted. The current research necessarily focused on aspects of internal communication that could be explored quantitatively. However, future research could probe the area in greater detail by asking brand team members and staff to provide examples of how the brand was communicated, what the brand team intended and how the communication was actually received by staff. Comparison and evaluation of different approaches to communicating the brand internally should enable appropriate recommendations to be made about the best ways of involving staff in branding building activities.

Future research might also examine brand team members' contact with consumers in greater detail to explore how brand teams might use it to inform their branding activities to better effect. Issues that might be investigated include the purpose and content of team-consumer contact, the extent to which information gained from team-consumer contact is shared among brand team members and actions taken as a result of team members' contact with consumers.

Finally, it would be interesting to look at brand identities in other industries. The research focused on financial services, an area with emerging brand development, in which differences in brand sophistication were expected between companies. However, differences between brands might be more apparent in industries in which branding is more mature.

CHAPTER 11 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research provided a broad perspective across stakeholder groups about factors hypothesised to affect the congruency of brand perceptions and brand performance. A need to explore intervening variables between team composition and organisational performance has been stressed in the literature (e.g. Eisenhardt and Schoonhöven, 1990; Hambrick and D'Aveni, 1992; Jackson, 1992; Priem, Lyon and Dess, 1999). Although failing to identify correctly all of the intervening variables in the conceptual model relating to brand perceptions and performance, support was found for some parts of the model. In particular, the impact of diversity in brand team members' characteristics on team congruency about the brand's identity and the importance of congruent brand perceptions between different stakeholder groups were demonstrated. It also enabled areas requiring further research to be identified.

The research makes a substantial methodological contribution by demonstrating how a multifaceted investigation of the complex relationships in this area may be explored empirically. The undertaking presented many challenges and the data obtained were not perfect: ideally the sample of organisations would have been larger and some aspects could not be examined comprehensively using quantitative data. However, the research makes major inroads into a complex area largely bereft of quantitative study and provides a benchmark work that others may use to explore sections of in greater detail. In particular, it represents, as far as the author is aware, the only empirical research to date both into brand management teams and brand identity.

The research provided evidence that the enlarged size of brand teams under corporate branding increases the degree of team diversity in the functional backgrounds of members.

It also afforded evidence that diversity may impair the formation of congruent perceptions about a brand's identity. While the increasing diversity of brand teams should enhance the potential resources available to the team, it will require greater emphasis on integration to arrive at congruent brand perceptions. Organisations thus need to be attentive to the composition of their brand teams and their strengths and weaknesses. Careful consideration will also be required in the appointment of new members to the brand team, taking into account the resulting implications for team processes and brand management performance. Organisations should consider employing some of the mechanisms designed to foster consensus among members of diverse teams and make the most of the range of experiences and perspectives offered by their diverse functional backgrounds.

Organisations also need to be alert to the potential barriers that may be presented by a diverse brand team with incongruent brand perceptions to effective communication of the brand identity amongst staff. Differing perceptions among brand team members may be multiplied as they interact with different departments across the organisation and communicate potentially inconsistent messages, both internally and, in turn, externally. Greater emphasis needs to be paid to the internal communication of the brand's identity to staff to ensure that all staff have a clear and consistent understanding of the brand that they are responsible for representing to consumers. Organisations might also consider initiating formal internal branding programmes to help harmonise perceptions about the brand's identity. The research demonstrated the impact of congruent brand perceptions among stakeholder groups on consumer-based brand performance and the vital role that consumer-facing staff play in shaping consumers' perceptions of the brand. Better staff awareness should thus enhance consumers' appreciation of the brand's identity, and if successfully formulated, result in superior brand performance.

Finally, the research suggested that financial services brands may still be lagging behind in developing brand identities. Financial services providers need to ensure that they create and implement a distinctive brand identity that is formulated so as to appeal to consumers and differentiates them from their many competitors if they are to survive in what is increasingly becoming an overcrowded market.

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Brand Team Questionnaire

[insert brand name]

Q1 What do you believe to be the few core values that underpin the [**insert brand name**] brand?
It may help if we clarify a value as being a lasting belief that a particular type of behaviour (e.g. being honest) or state of existence (e.g. security) is preferable.

....

....

Q2 What do you believe to be the [**insert brand name**] brand's core purpose – in other words, its reason for being, beyond making money?
As an example, a mortgage company defined the core purpose of its brand as being "to strengthen the social fabric of society by continually democratising home ownership" and Nike as "experience the emotion of competition, winning and crushing competitors".

....

....

Q3 What do you see as the big audacious goal for the [**insert brand name**] brand over the long-term horizon, in other words, at least 10 years ahead?
For example, in the 1950s NASA had the big audacious goal of putting a man on the moon before the end of the 1960s.

....

....

Q4 Firms have visions of the future environment that will be shaped by their brand. For example, Microsoft envisioned a future environment in which there is a computer on every desk. Think a long time into the future, for example at least 10 years ahead, and describe the environment that you would like to see as a result of the [**insert brand name**] brand.

....

....

Q5 To achieve this envisioned future, what role must the [**insert brand name**] brand play?

....

....

Q6 What is [**insert brand name**]'s brand positioning statement? In other words, the statement that clarifies the functional advantage of the [**insert brand name**] brand compared with its competitors.

....

....

....

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APPENDIX 1 Brand Team Questionnaire

Q7 How would you describe the personality of the **[insert brand name]** brand?

Q8 *Please list all the measures you use to assess the [**insert brand name**] brand's performance and specify* how often each measure is collected.

Measures	*Number of times collected per year*
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Q9 Please indicate the extent to which the following values describe ***the [insert brand name] brand***, by circling the appropriate number for each value.

	A little				**A lot**
Co-operation with all our stakeholders	1	2	3	4	5
Diligence	1	2	3	4	5
Moral Integrity	1	2	3	4	5
Openness	1	2	3	4	5
Initiative	1	2	3	4	5
Experimentation (with changes to the brand to satisfy our customers)	1	2	3	4	5
Aggressiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Fairness	1	2	3	4	5
Adaptability	1	2	3	4	5
Creativity	1	2	3	4	5
Development	1	2	3	4	5
Courtesy	1	2	3	4	5

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APPENDIX 1 Brand Team Questionnaire

	A little				A lot
Cautiousness	1	2	3	4	5
Social Equality	1	2	3	4	5
Economy	1	2	3	4	5
Consideration	1	2	3	4	5
Formality	1	2	3	4	5
Humour	1	2	3	4	5
Forgiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Broad-mindedness	1	2	3	4	5
Logic	1	2	3	4	5
Autonomy	1	2	3	4	5
Obedience	1	2	3	4	5
Orderliness	1	2	3	4	5

Q10 Thinking about the values of the [**insert brand name**] brand, how ***appropriate*** do you think these values are for the market in which it competes? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Not at all appropriate 1 2 3 4 5 **Very appropriate**

Q11 Thinking about the values of the [**insert brand name**] brand, how ***adaptive*** do you think these values are to consumers' needs, which change over time? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Not at all adaptive 1 2 3 4 5 **Very adaptive**

Q12 What added value does the [**insert brand name**] brand provide? In other words, those benefits over and beyond the basic service. For example, a garage might provide added value by offering to take you home/to work and pick you up again when you bring your car in for servicing. A bank might provide added value by using your name and being courteous when you take a cheque in.

....

....

....

Q13 Consumers have an opinion about how they would ***ideally*** like certain aspects of their personality to be recognised by others and they use particular brands to communicate specific ***ideal*** characteristics about themselves. For example, some people may be proud to use a particular brand because it conveys they are willing to listen to others, are fair-minded and confident. What personality characteristics does [**insert brand name**] have which consumers can use to convey their ***ideal*** selves to others?

....

....

....

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Q14 Consumers also have an opinion about how they would like certain aspects of their ***actual*** personality to be recognised by others and they also use particular brands to communicate specific ***actual*** characteristics about themselves. For example, some people may be proud to use a particular brand because it conveys they are traditional, approachable and wise with money. What personality characteristics does [**insert brand name**] have which consumers can use to convey their ***actual*** selves to others?

Q15 Please state the extent to which you agree or disagree that the [**insert brand name**] brand could be described by the following descriptions, by circling the appropriate number for each description.

	Strongly disagree				**Strongly agree**
Down-to-earth	1	2	3	4	5
Honest	1	2	3	4	5
Wholesome	1	2	3	4	5
Cheerful	1	2	3	4	5
Daring	1	2	3	4	5
Spirited	1	2	3	4	5
Imaginative	1	2	3	4	5
Up-to-date	1	2	3	4	5
Reliable	1	2	3	4	5
Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5
Successful	1	2	3	4	5
Upper class	1	2	3	4	5
Charming	1	2	3	4	5
For the outdoor type	1	2	3	4	5
Tough	1	2	3	4	5

Q16 If you had to explain to someone what is meant by a brand's reputation, what would you say? (i.e. your definition of the word reputation in relation to *a brand in general*, rather than the [**insert brand name**] brand's reputation in particular)

Q17 What criteria would you use to evaluate a financial services brand's reputation, as a member of a brand team? (i.e. in relation to *a brand in general,* rather than the [**insert brand name**] brand's reputation in particular)

APPENDIX 1 Brand Team Questionnaire

Q18 What is your evaluation of ***the [insert brand name] brand's*** reputation? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Very unfavourable	1	2	3	4	5	**Very favourable**

[insert brand name]'s brand team

The next few questions relate to the brand team, in other words, those people responsible for designing and developing the brand strategy. This could include both internal staff (marketing, PR, etc.) and those in external agencies working on your brand.

Q19 Please assess ***your relationship with other members of the brand team*** on the following descriptions, by circling the appropriate number between each pair of descriptors.

compatible goals and desires	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	incompatible goals and desires
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	hostile
unfair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	fair
selfish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unselfish
equal power	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unequal power
co-operative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	competitive
social-oriented	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	work-oriented
formal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	informal
clashing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	harmonious
emotional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intellectual
close	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	distant
similar roles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	different roles
superficial	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intense
easy to leave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	difficult to break contact
discrete transaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	longer term relationship
lot of trust	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	requires little trust
high risk	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	low risk/uncertainty
history of relationship important to its continuing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	history is not important

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APPENDIX 1 Brand Team Questionnaire

Q20 Please indicate the frequency of each of the following meetings you have with other members of the brand team by *circling* the appropriate number for each type of meeting.

	Never	**Very infrequently**				**Very frequently**
Formal face-to-face meetings	0	1	2	3	4	5
Informal face-to-face meetings	0	1	2	3	4	5
Formal written communication (e.g. letters, memos)	0	1	2	3	4	5
Informal written communication (e.g. personal notes)	0	1	2	3	4	5
Formal e-mail	0	1	2	3	4	5
Informal e-mail	0	1	2	3	4	5
Formal faxes	0	1	2	3	4	5
Informal faxes	0	1	2	3	4	5
Telephone conversations	0	1	2	3	4	5

Q21 *Overall, how formal/informal is communication in the brand team?* (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Very informal	1	2	3	4	5	**Very formal**

[insert brand name]'s sales/service staff

Q22 Please assess ***your relationship with sales/service staff*** on the following descriptions, by circling the *appropriate number between each pair of descriptors.*

compatible goals and desires	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	*incompatible goals and desires*
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	hostile
unfair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	fair
selfish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unselfish
equal power	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unequal power
co-operative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	competitive
social-oriented	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	work-oriented
formal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	informal
clashing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	harmonious
emotional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intellectual

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APPENDIX 1 Brand Team Questionnaire

close	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	distant
similar roles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	different roles
superficial	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intense
easy to leave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	difficult to break contact
discrete transaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	longer term relationship
lot of trust	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Requires little trust
high risk	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	low risk/uncertainty
history of *relationship* important to its continuing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	history is not important

Q23 Please indicate the frequency of the following meetings you have with sales/service staff by circling the appropriate number for each type of meeting.

	Never	**Very infrequently**				**Very frequently**
Formal face-to-face meetings	0	1	2	3	4	5
Informal face-to-face meetings	0	1	2	3	4	5
Formal written communication (e.g. letters, memos)	0	1	2	3	4	5
Informal written communication (e.g. personal notes)	0	1	2	3	4	5
Formal e-mail	0	1	2	3	4	5
Informal e-mail	0	1	2	3	4	5
Formal faxes	0	1	2	3	4	5
Informal faxes	0	1	2	3	4	5
Telephone conversations	0	1	2	3	4	5

Q24 Overall, how formal/informal is communication between you and sales/service staff? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Very informal	1	2	3	4	5	**Very formal**

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APPENDIX 1 Brand Team Questionnaire

Q25 Which of the following communications channels do you use to communicate with sales/service staff about the nature of the [**insert brand name**] brand? (Please tick all that apply.)

Workshops	☐
Presentations	☐
Memos	☐
Newsletters	☐
Posters	☐
E-mail	☐
Videos	☐
Other (please specify)..................	☐
Other (please specify)..................	☐

Q26 Please rate the ***effectiveness*** of those communications channels used, in terms of the extent to which they improve sales/service staff's understanding of the [**insert brand name**] brand. (Please rate only those channels used, by circling the appropriate number on the scales below.)

	Very ineffective				**Very effective**
Workshops	1	2	3	4	5
Presentations	1	2	3	4	5
Memos	1	2	3	4	5
Newsletters	1	2	3	4	5
Posters	1	2	3	4	5
E-mail	1	2	3	4	5
Videos	1	2	3	4	5
Other (please specify)...........	1	2	3	4	5
Other (please specify)...........	1	2	3	4	5

Q27 Which of the following statements best describes communication between you and sales/service staff? (Please put a tick in the appropriate box.)

Mostly one-way with you doing most of the communicating	☐
Mostly one-way with the sales/service staff doing most of the communicating..........	☐
Mostly two-way..	☐

Your organisation

Q28 Please indicate the extent to which the following values describe ***your organisation*** by circling the appropriate number for each value.

	A little				A lot
Co-operation with all our stakeholders	1	2	3	4	5
Diligence	1	2	3	4	5
Moral Integrity	1	2	3	4	5
Openness	1	2	3	4	5
Initiative	1	2	3	4	5
Experimentation (with changes to the organisation to satisfy our customers	1	2	3	4	5
Aggressiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Fairness	1	2	3	4	5
Adaptability	1	2	3	4	5
Creativity	1	2	3	4	5
Development	1	2	3	4	5
Courtesy	1	2	3	4	5
Cautiousness	1	2	3	4	5
Social Equality	1	2	3	4	5
Economy	1	2	3	4	5
Consideration	1	2	3	4	5
Formality	1	2	3	4	5
Humour	1	2	3	4	5
Forgiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Broad-mindedness	1	2	3	4	5
Logic	1	2	3	4	5
Autonomy	1	2	3	4	5
Obedience	1	2	3	4	5
Orderliness	1	2	3	4	5

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APPENDIX 1 Brand Team Questionnaire

Q29 Thinking about your organisation's values, how ***appropriate*** do you think they are for the market in which it competes? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Not at all appropriate	1	2	3	4	5	**Very appropriate**

Q30 Thinking about your organisation's values, how ***adaptive*** do you think they are to consumers' needs, which change over time? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Not at all adaptive	1	2	3	4	5	**Very adaptive**

[insert brand name]'s consumers

Q31 Please indicate the frequency with which you have contact with [**insert brand name**]'s consumers, by circling the appropriate number for each type of contact below.

	Never	**Very infrequently**				**Very frequently**
Face-to-face meetings	0	1	2	3	4	5
Written communication (letters)	0	1	2	3	4	5
E-mail	0	1	2	3	4	5
Faxes	0	1	2	3	4	5
Telephone conversations	0	1	2	3	4	5

Q32 Please assess ***the <u>ideal</u> relationship between sales/service staff and consumers*** on the following descriptions, by circling the appropriate number between each pair of descriptors.

compatible goals and desires	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	incompatible goals and desires
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	hostile
unfair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	fair
selfish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unselfish
equal power	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unequal power
co-operative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	competitive
social-oriented	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	work-oriented
formal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	informal
clashing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	harmonious
emotional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intellectual
close	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	distant
similar roles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	different roles
superficial	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intense

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easy to leave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	difficult to break contact
discrete transaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	longer term relationship
lot of trust	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	requires little trust
high risk	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	low risk/uncertainty
history of relationship important to its continuing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	history is not important

Your views

Q33 Please indicate the extent to which the following values are important to ***you personally*** by circling the appropriate number for each value.

	Not very important				**Very important**
Co-operation with all our stakeholders	1	2	3	4	5
Diligence	1	2	3	4	5
Moral Integrity	1	2	3	4	5
Openness	1	2	3	4	5
Initiative	1	2	3	4	5
Experimentation (with changes to the brand to satisfy our customers)	1	2	3	4	5
Aggressiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Fairness	1	2	3	4	5
Adaptability	1	2	3	4	5
Creativity	1	2	3	4	5
Development	1	2	3	4	5
Courtesy	1	2	3	4	5
Cautiousness	1	2	3	4	5
Social Equality	1	2	3	4	5
Economy	1	2	3	4	5
Consideration	1	2	3	4	5
Formality	1	2	3	4	5

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APPENDIX 1 Brand Team Questionnaire

	Not very important				Very important
Humour	1	2	3	4	5
Forgiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Broad-mindedness	1	2	3	4	5
Logic	1	2	3	4	5
Autonomy	1	2	3	4	5
Obedience	1	2	3	4	5
Orderliness	1	2	3	4	5

Personal details

The questions in this section are for use by The Open University to assess the characteristics of people completing the questionnaire. Your personal details will not be passed to any other individuals or organisations and the data will not be used in any way that will identify you as an individual.

Q34 How long have you been a member of the brand team?

.... Years .... Months

Q35 How long have you worked for this company?

.... Years .... Months

Q36 How long have you worked in this industry?

.... Years

Q37 In which function/department do you currently work?

Marketing.. ☐
Operations.. ☐
Finance.. ☐
General Management... ☐
Sales.. ☐
Personnel.. ☐
Production.. ☐
Distribution... ☐
Information Technology.. ☐
Other (Please specify).. ☐

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APPENDIX 1 Brand Team Questionnaire

Q38 In which function/department have you spent most of your career?

- Marketing.. ☐
- Operations.. ☐
- Finance.. ☐
- General Management.. ☐
- Sales.. ☐
- Personnel.. ☐
- Production.. ☐
- Distribution.. ☐
- Information Technology.. ☐
- Other (Please specify).. ☐

Q39 Please indicate which, if any, of the following qualifications you hold. (Please tick all that apply.)

- GCSE or GCE/CSE 'O' Levels.................................... ☐
- 'A' Levels/Highers.. ☐
- BA/BSc.. ☐
- MA/MSc.. ☐
- MBA.. ☐
- PhD.. ☐

Other qualifications (please specify)

.... ☐

.... ☐

.... ☐

Professional qualifications (please specify)

.... ☐

.... ☐

.... ☐

Q40 How is your performance in your current job assessed? (Please tick all that apply.)

- Individually.. ☐
- As a team.. ☐
- Both individually and as a team.............................. ☐
- Other (Please specify).. ☐

Q41 Which of [**insert brand name**]'s products do you work on?

....

Q42 How old are you?

.... Years

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Q43 What is your job title?

....

Q44 What is your name? (Your name will be used for administration purposes only. Your answers to this questionnaire will be kept anonymous.)

....

Thank you for your help in completing this questionnaire.

Please return your completed questionnaire in the pre-paid envelope provided.

Professor Leslie de Chernatony
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The Open University
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
MK7 6AA

APPENDIX 2 McDonald and Gandz's (1991) list of values

1. Co-operation
2. Diligence
3. Moral Integrity
4. Openness
5. Initiative
6. Experimentation
7. Aggressiveness
8. Fairness
9. Adaptability
10. Creativity
11. Development
12. Courtesy
13. Cautiousness
14. Social Equality
15. Economy
16. Consideration
17. Formality
18. Humour
19. Forgiveness
20. Broad-Mindedness
21. Logic
22. Autonomy
23. Obedience
24. Orderliness

APPENDIX 3 The 15 facets of Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale

Down to earth

Honest

Wholesome

Cheerful

Daring

Spirited

Imaginative

Up to date

Reliable

Intelligent

Successful

Upperclass

Charming

Outdoorsy (amended to read 'For the outdoor type')

Tough

APPENDIX 4 Iacobucci and Ostrom's (1996) instrument for examining relationships

compatible goals and desires	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	incompatible goals and desires
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	hostile
unfair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	fair
selfish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unselfish
equal power	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unequal power
co-operative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	competitive
social-oriented	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	work-oriented
formal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	informal
clashing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	harmonious
emotional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intellectual
close	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	distant
similar roles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	different roles
superficial	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intense
easy to leave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	difficult to break contact
discrete transaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	longer term relationship
lot of trust	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	requires little trust
high risk	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	low risk/uncertainty
history of relationship important to its continuing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	history is not important

Consumers Questionnaire

Your experience with [insert brand name]

Q1 Which of [insert brand name]'s products do you use?

[insert product]......... ☐
[insert product]......... ☐
[insert product]......... ☐
[insert product]......... ☐

Q2 Would you consider using other products by [insert brand name]?

Yes....................... ☐
No........................ ☐

Q3 Would you recommend [insert brand name] to other people?

Yes....................... ☐
No........................ ☐

Q4 How much do you like [insert brand name]? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 **Very much**

Q5 How satisfied are you overall with the [insert brand name] brand?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 **Very satisfied**

Q6 How satisfied are you with the [insert brand name]'s sales/service staff?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 **Very satisfied**

Q7 How satisfied are you with [insert brand name]'s product(s) that you have?

Very dissatisfied 1 2 3 4 5 **Very satisfied**

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APPENDIX 5 Consumer Questionnaire

Your views about [insert brand name]

Q8 Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements describing [insert brand name], by circling the number that corresponds most closely to your level of agreement with each statement.

	Strongly disagree				Strongly agree
[insert purpose statement:]	1	2	3	4	5
[insert goal statement:]	1	2	3	4	5
[insert envisioned future statement:]	1	2	3	4	5
[insert role for envisioned future statement:]	1	2	3	4	5
[insert positioning statement:]	1	2	3	4	5

Q9 Please indicate the extent to which the following values describe ***the [insert brand name] brand***, by *circling the appropriate number for each value.* It may help if we clarify a value as being a lasting belief that a particular type of behaviour (e.g. being honest) or state of existence (e.g. security) is preferable.

	A little				A lot
Co-operation with consumers	1	2	3	4	5
Diligence	1	2	3	4	5
Moral Integrity	1	2	3	4	5
Openness	1	2	3	4	5
Initiative	1	2	3	4	5
Experimentation (with changes to the brand to satisfy consumers)	1	2	3	4	5
Aggressiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Fairness	1	2	3	4	5
Adaptability	1	2	3	4	5
Creativity	1	2	3	4	5
Development	1	2	3	4	5
Courtesy	1	2	3	4	5
Cautiousness	1	2	3	4	5

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APPENDIX 5 Consumer Questionnaire

	A little				A lot
Social Equality	1	2	3	4	5
Economy	1	2	3	4	5
Consideration	1	2	3	4	5
Formality	1	2	3	4	5
Humour	1	2	3	4	5
Forgiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Broad-mindedness	1	2	3	4	5
Logic	1	2	3	4	5
Autonomy	1	2	3	4	5
Obedience	1	2	3	4	5
Orderliness	1	2	3	4	5

Q10 Thinking about the values of the [insert brand name] brand, how ***appropriate*** do you think these values are for the market in which it competes? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Not at all appropriate 1 2 3 4 5 **Very appropriate**

Q11 Thinking about the values of the **[insert brand name]** brand, how ***adaptive*** do you think these values are to your needs as a consumer, which change over time? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Not at all adaptive 1 2 3 4 5 **Very adaptive**

Q12 How have you acquired most of your knowledge about the [insert brand name] brand?

....

....

Q13 What added value does the [insert brand name] brand provide for you? In other words, those benefits over and beyond the basic service. For example, a garage might provide added value by offering to take you home/to work and pick you up again when you bring your car in for servicing. A bank might provide added value by using your name and being courteous when you take a cheque in.

....

....

....

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APPENDIX 5 Consumer Questionnaire

Q14 People have an opinion about how they would ***ideally*** like certain aspects of their personality to be recognised by others and they use particular brands to communicate specific ***ideal*** characteristics about themselves to others. For example, some people may be proud to use a particular brand because it conveys they are willing to listen to others, are fair-minded and confident. To what extent are [insert brand name]'s personality characteristics like your ***ideal*** self? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Very much *unlike* my *ideal* self	1	2	3	4	5	**Very much *like* my *ideal* self**

Q15 How does the [insert brand name] brand help you convey aspects of your desired ***ideal*** self to others?

....

....

Q16 People also have an idea about how they would like certain aspects of their ***actual*** personality to be recognised by others and also use particular brands to communicate specific ***actual*** characteristics about themselves to others. For example, some people may be proud to use a particular brand because it conveys they are traditional, approachable and wise with money. To what extent are [insert brand name]'s personality characteristics like your ***actual*** self? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Very much *unlike* my *actual* self	1	2	3	4	5	**Very much *like* my *actual* self**

Q17 How does the [insert brand name] brand help you convey aspects of your ***actual*** self to others?

....

....

Q18 Please indicate the extent to which the following describe your ***ideal*** self, by circling the appropriate number for each characteristic.

	Very much *unlike* my ideal self				**Very much *like* my ideal self**
(insert emotional characteristic of the brand)	1	2	3	4	5
(insert emotional characteristic of the brand)	1	2	3	4	5
(insert emotional characteristic of the brand)	1	2	3	4	5

Q19 Please indicate the extent to which the following describe your ***actual*** self, by circling the appropriate number for each characteristic.

	Very much *unlike* my actual self				**Very much *like* my actual self**
(insert emotional characteristic of the brand)	1	2	3	4	5
(insert emotional characteristic of the brand)	1	2	3	4	5
(insert emotional characteristic of the brand)	1	2	3	4	5

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APPENDIX 5 Consumer Questionnaire

Q20 Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree that the [insert brand name] brand could be described by the following descriptions, by circling the appropriate number for each description.

	Strongly disagree				Strongly agree
Down-to-earth	1	2	3	4	5
Honest	1	2	3	4	5
Wholesome	1	2	3	4	5
Cheerful	1	2	3	4	5
Daring	1	2	3	4	5
Spirited	1	2	3	4	5
Imaginative	1	2	3	4	5
Up-to-date	1	2	3	4	5
Reliable	1	2	3	4	5
Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5
Successful	1	2	3	4	5
Upper class	1	2	3	4	5
Charming	1	2	3	4	5
For the outdoors type	1	2	3	4	5
Tough	1	2	3	4	5

Q21 If you had to explain to someone what is meant by a brand's reputation, what would you say? (i.e. your definition of the word reputation in relation to *a brand in general*, rather than the [insert brand name] brand's reputation in particular)

....

....

....

Q22 What criteria would you, as a consumer, use to evaluate a financial services brand's reputation? (i.e. in relation to *a brand in general*, rather than the [insert brand name] brand's reputation in particular)

....

....

....

Q23 What is your evaluation of ***the [insert brand name] brand's*** reputation? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Very unfavourable 1 2 3 4 5 **Very favourable**

Your experience with [insert brand name]'s sales/service staff

Q24 Please indicate the frequency with which you have contact with [insert brand name]'s staff by circling the appropriate number for each type of possible contact below.

	Never	*Very* infrequently				*Very* frequently
Face-to-face meetings	0	1	2	3	4	5
Written communication (letters)	0	1	2	3	4	5
E-mail	0	1	2	3	4	5
Faxes	0	1	2	3	4	5
Telephone conversations	0	1	2	3	4	5

Q25 How would you describe your relationship with [insert brand name]'s sales/service staff? Please rate your interactions with these staff, by circling the appropriate number between each pair of descriptors. For example, if you find your interactions with these staff very friendly, circle 1, or if very hostile, circle 7. If you find these interactions very unfair, circle 1, or if very fair, circle 7.

compatible goals and desires	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	incompatible goals and desires
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	hostile
unfair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	fair
selfish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unselfish
equal power	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unequal power
co-operative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	competitive
social-oriented	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	work-oriented
formal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	informal
clashing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	harmonious
emotional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intellectual
close	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	distant
similar roles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	different roles
superficial	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intense
easy to leave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	difficult to break contact
discrete transaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	longer term relationship
lot of trust	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	requires little trust
high risk	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	low risk/uncertainty
history of relationship important to its continuing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	history is not important

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Your personal views

Q26 Please indicate the extent to which the following values are important to ***you personally*** by circling the appropriate number for each value.

	Not very important				**Very important**
Co-operation with consumers	1	2	3	4	5
Diligence	1	2	3	4	5
Moral Integrity	1	2	3	4	5
Openness	1	2	3	4	5
Initiative	1	2	3	4	5
Experimentation (with changes to the brand to satisfy consumers)	1	2	3	4	5
Aggressiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Fairness	1	2	3	4	5
Adaptability	1	2	3	4	5
Creativity	1	2	3	4	5
Development	1	2	3	4	5
Courtesy	1	2	3	4	5
Cautiousness	1	2	3	4	5
Social Equality	1	2	3	4	5
Economy	1	2	3	4	5
Consideration	1	2	3	4	5
Formality	1	2	3	4	5
Humour	1	2	3	4	5
Forgiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Broad-mindedness	1	2	3	4	5
Logic	1	2	3	4	5
Autonomy	1	2	3	4	5
Obedience	1	2	3	4	5
Orderliness	1	2	3	4	5

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About you

The questions in this section are for use by The Open University to assess the characteristics of people completing the questionnaire. Your personal details will not be passed to any other individuals or organisations and the data will not be used in any way that will identify you as an individual.

Q27 What is your occupation?

....

Q28 Please indicate which, if any, of the following qualifications you hold. (Please tick all that apply.)

- GCSEs or CSE/GSE 'O' Levels................................ ☐
- 'A' Levels/Highers.. ☐
- City & Guilds/NVQ.. ☐
- HNC/HND .... ☐
- Bachelor's Degree.. ☐
- Master's Degree/Doctorate .... ☐
- Other qualifications (please specify)
  - .... ☐
  - .... ☐
  - .... ☐
- Professional qualifications (please specify)
  - .... ☐
  - .... ☐
  - .... ☐

Q29 How old are you?

....

Q30 What is your name? (Your name will be used for administration purposes only. Your answers to this questionnaire will be kept anonymous.)

....

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APPENDIX 5 Consumer Questionnaire

Thank you for your help in completing this questionnaire.

Please tick one of the following charities to indicate the charity to which you would like us to make a donation.

- NSPCC ☐
- Oxfam ☐
- Imperial Cancer Research Fund ☐
- World Wide Fund for nature (WWF) ☐

Please now return your completed questionnaire in the pre-paid envelope provided.

Professor Leslie de Chernatony
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The Open University
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
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APPENDIX 6 Communication Questions (Adapted from Smith et al., 1994)

Communication Frequency

1. The frequency of formal face-to-face meetings between you and other members of the brand team.

2. The frequency of informal face-to-face meetings between you and other members of the brand team.

3. The frequency of formal written communication between you and other members of the brand team.

4. The frequency of informal written communication; personal notes, etc. between you and other members of the brand team.

5. The frequency of telephone conversations between you and other members of the brand team.

6. The number of face-to-face meetings involving more than one member but less than all members of the brand team.

The frequency of communication will be assessed using 6-point scales with verbal anchors of "0=Never", "1=Very infrequently" and "5=Very frequently".

Communication Formality

Q: Overall how formal/informal is communication in the brand team?

Very formal 1 2 3 4 5 Very Informal

Sales/Service Staff Questionnaire

[insert brand name]

Q1 Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements describing the [**insert brand name**] brand, by circling the number that corresponds most closely to your level of agreement with each statement.

	Strongly disagree				Strongly agree
[insert purpose statement:]	1	2	3	4	5
[insert goal statement:]	1	2	3	4	5
[insert envisioned future statement:]	1	2	3	4	5
[insert role for envisioned future statement:]	1	2	3	4	5
[insert positioning statement:]	1	2	3	4	5

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APPENDIX 7 Consumer-facing Staff Questionnaire

Q2 Please indicate the extent to which the following values describe ***the [insert brand name] brand*** by circling the appropriate number for each value. It may help if we clarify a value as being a lasting belief that a particular type of behaviour (e.g. being honest) or state of existence (e.g. security) is preferable.

	A little				A lot
Co-operation with all our stakeholders*	1	2	3	4	5
Diligence	1	2	3	4	5
Moral Integrity	1	2	3	4	5
Openness	1	2	3	4	5
Initiative	1	2	3	4	5
Experimentation (with changes to the brand to satisfy our customers)	1	2	3	4	5
Aggressiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Fairness	1	2	3	4	5
Adaptability	1	2	3	4	5
Creativity	1	2	3	4	5
Development	1	2	3	4	5
Courtesy	1	2	3	4	5
Cautiousness	1	2	3	4	5
Social Equality	1	2	3	4	5
Economy	1	2	3	4	5
Consideration	1	2	3	4	5
Formality	1	2	3	4	5
Humour	1	2	3	4	5
Forgiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Broad-mindedness	1	2	3	4	5
Logic	1	2	3	4	5
Autonomy	1	2	3	4	5
Obedience	1	2	3	4	5
Orderliness	1	2	3	4	5

* By '**stakeholders**' we mean all individuals or groups who can affect or are affected by the achievement of the firm's objectives e.g. consumers, staff, shareholders, suppliers, distributors.

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APPENDIX 7 Consumer-facing Staff Questionnaire

Q3 Thinking about the values of the [**insert brand name**] brand, how ***appropriate*** do you think these values *are for the market in which it competes?*

Not at all appropriate	1	2	3	4	5	**Very appropriate**

Q4 Thinking about the values of the [**insert brand name**] brand, how ***adaptive*** do you think these values are to consumers' needs, which change over time?

Not at all adaptive	1	2	3	4	5	**Very adaptive**

Q5 How have you acquired most of your knowledge about the [**insert brand name**] brand?

....

....

Q6 What added value does the [**insert brand name**] brand provide? In other words, those benefits over and beyond the basic service. For example, a garage might provide added value by offering to take you home/to work and pick you up again when you bring your car in for servicing. A bank might provide added value by using your name and being courteous when you take a cheque in.

Q7 Consumers have an opinion about how they would ***ideally*** like certain aspects of their personality to be recognised by others and they use particular brands to communicate specific ***ideal*** characteristics about themselves. For example, some people may be proud to use a particular brand because it conveys they are willing to listen to others, are fair-minded and confident. What personality characteristics does [**insert brand name**] have which consumers can use to convey their ***ideal*** selves to others?

Q8 Consumers also have an opinion about how they would like certain aspects of their ***actual*** personality to be recognised by others and they also use particular brands to communicate specific ***actual*** characteristics about themselves. For example, some people may be proud to use a particular brand because it conveys they are traditional, approachable and wise with money. What personality characteristics does [**insert brand name**] have which consumers can use to convey their ***actual*** selves to others?

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APPENDIX 7 Consumer-facing Staff Questionnaire

Q9 Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree that the [**insert brand name**] brand could be described by the following descriptions, by circling the appropriate number for each description.

	Strongly disagree				**Strongly agree**
Down-to-earth	1	2	3	4	5
Honest	1	2	3	4	5
Wholesome	1	2	3	4	5
Cheerful	1	2	3	4	5
Daring	1	2	3	4	5
Spirited	1	2	3	4	5
Imaginative	1	2	3	4	5
Up-to-date	1	2	3	4	5
Reliable	1	2	3	4	5
Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5
Successful	1	2	3	4	5
Upper class	1	2	3	4	5
Charming	1	2	3	4	5
For the outdoor type	1	2	3	4	5
Tough	1	2	3	4	5

Q10 If you had to explain to someone what is meant by a brand's reputation, what would you say? (i.e. your definition of the word reputation in relation to *a brand in general*, rather than the [**insert brand name**] brand's reputation in particular)

Q11 What criteria would you use to evaluate a financial services brand's reputation, as a member of sales/service staff? (i.e. in relation to *a brand in general*, rather than the [**insert brand name**] brand's *reputation in particular*)

Q12 What is your evaluation of ***the [insert brand name] brand's*** reputation? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Very unfavourable	1	2	3	4	5	**Very favourable**

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Your sales/service colleagues

Q13 Please assess ***your relationship with your sales/service colleagues*** on the following descriptions, by circling the appropriate number between each pair of descriptors.

compatible goals and desires	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	incompatible goals and desires
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	hostile
unfair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	fair
selfish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unselfish
equal power	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unequal power
co-operative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	competitive
social-oriented	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	work-oriented
formal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	informal
clashing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	harmonious
emotional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intellectual
close	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	distant
similar roles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	different roles
superficial	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intense
easy to leave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	difficult to break contact
discrete transaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	longer term relationship
lot of trust	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	requires little trust
high risk	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	low risk/uncertainty
history of relationship important to its continuing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	history is not important

Q14 Please indicate the frequency of the following meetings you have with your sales/service colleagues by circling the appropriate number for each type of meeting.

	Never	**Very infrequently**				**Very frequently**
Formal face-to-face meetings	0	1	2	3	4	5
Informal face-to-face meetings	0	1	2	3	4	5
Formal written communication (e.g. letters, memos)	0	1	2	3	4	5
Informal written communication (e.g. personal notes)	0	1	2	3	4	5

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APPENDIX 7 Consumer-facing Staff Questionnaire

	Never	Very infrequently				Very frequently
Formal e-mail	0	1	2	3	4	5
Informal e-mail	0	1	2	3	4	5
Formal faxes	0	1	2	3	4	5
Informal faxes	0	1	2	3	4	5
Telephone conversations	0	1	2	3	4	5

Q15 Overall, how formal/informal is communication with your sales/service colleagues? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Very informal	1	2	3	4	5	**Very formal**

[Insert brand name]'s brand team

The next few questions relate to the brand team, in other words, those people responsible for designing and developing the brand strategy. This could include both internal staff (marketing, PR, etc.) and those in external agencies working on your brand.

Q16 Please assess ***the relationship between the brand team and sales/service staff*** on the following descriptions, by circling the appropriate number between each pair of descriptors.

compatible goals and desires	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	incompatible goals and desires
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	hostile
unfair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	fair
selfish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unselfish
equal power	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unequal power
co-operative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	competitive
social-oriented	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	work-oriented
formal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	informal
clashing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	harmonious
emotional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intellectual
close	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	distant
similar roles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	different roles
superficial	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intense
easy to leave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	difficult to break contact

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discrete transaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	longer term relationship
lot of trust	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	requires little trust
high risk	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	low risk/uncertainty
history of relationship important to its continuing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	history is not important

Q17 Please indicate the frequency of the following meetings between members of the brand team and sales/service staff, by circling the appropriate number for each type of meeting.

	Never	**Very infrequently**				**Very frequently**
Formal face-to-face meetings	0	1	2	3	4	5
Informal face-to-face meetings	0	1	2	3	4	5
Formal written communication (e.g. letters, memos)	0	1	2	3	4	5
Informal written communication (e.g. personal notes)	0	1	2	3	4	5
Formal e-mail	0	1	2	3	4	5
Informal e-mail	0	1	2	3	4	5
Formal faxes	0	1	2	3	4	5
Informal faxes	0	1	2	3	4	5
Telephone conversations	0	1	2	3	4	5

Q18 Overall, how formal/informal is communication between the brand team and sales/service staff? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Very informal	1	2	3	4	5	**Very formal**

Q19 Which of the following communications channels does the brand team use to communicate with sales/service staff about the nature of the [**insert brand name**] brand? (Please tick all that apply.)

- Workshops ☐
- Presentations ☐
- Memos ☐
- Newsletters ☐
- Posters ☐
- E-mail ☐
- Videos ☐
- Other (please specify)................... ☐
- Other (please specify)................... ☐

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Q20 Please rate the ***effectiveness*** of those communications channels used, in terms of the extent to which they improve your understanding of the [**insert brand name**] brand. (Please rate only those channels used, by circling the appropriate number on the scales below.)

	Very ineffective				Very effective
Workshops	1	2	3	4	5
Presentations	1	2	3	4	5
Memos	1	2	3	4	5
Newsletters	1	2	3	4	5
Posters	1	2	3	4	5
E-mail	1	2	3	4	5
Videos	1	2	3	4	5
Other (please specify)...........	1	2	3	4	5
Other (please specify)...........	1	2	3	4	5

Q21 Which of the following best describes communication between members of the brand team and sales/service staff? (Please put a tick in the appropriate box.)

Mostly one-way with the brand team doing most of the communicating .... ☐

Mostly one-way with the sales/service staff doing most of the communicating.......... ☐

Mostly two-way.. ☐

Your organisation

Q22 Please indicate the extent to which the following values describe ***your organisation***, by circling the appropriate number for each value.

	A little				A lot
Co-operation with all our stakeholders*	1	2	3	4	5
Diligence	1	2	3	4	5
Moral Integrity	1	2	3	4	5
Openness	1	2	3	4	5
Initiative	1	2	3	4	5
Experimentation (with changes to the organisation to satisfy our customers)	1	2	3	4	5

* By '**stakeholders**' we mean all individuals or groups who can affect or are affected by the achievement of the firm's objectives e.g. consumers, staff, shareholders, suppliers, distributors.

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	A little				A lot
Aggressiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Fairness	1	2	3	4	5
Adaptability	1	2	3	4	5
Creativity	1	2	3	4	5
Development	1	2	3	4	5
Courtesy	1	2	3	4	5
Cautiousness	1	2	3	4	5
Social Equality	1	2	3	4	5
Economy	1	2	3	4	5
Consideration	1	2	3	4	5
Formality	1	2	3	4	5
Humour	1	2	3	4	5
Forgiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Broad-mindedness	1	2	3	4	5
Logic	1	2	3	4	5
Autonomy	1	2	3	4	5
Obedience	1	2	3	4	5
Orderliness	1	2	3	4	5

Q23 Thinking about your organisation's values, how ***appropriate*** do you think they are for the market in which it competes? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Not at all appropriate 1 2 3 4 5 **Very appropriate**

Q24 Thinking about your organisation's values, how ***adaptive*** do you think they are to consumers' needs, which change over time? (Please circle the appropriate number on the scale below.)

Not at all adaptive 1 2 3 4 5 **Very adaptive**

Your experience with consumers

Q25 Please indicate the frequency with which you have contact with **[insert brand name]**'s consumers, by *circling the appropriate number for each type of contact below.*

	Never	Very infrequently				Very frequently
Face-to-face meetings	0	1	2	3	4	5
Written communication (letters)	0	1	2	3	4	5
E-mail	0	1	2	3	4	5
Faxes	0	1	2	3	4	5
Telephone conversations	0	1	2	3	4	5

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APPENDIX 7 Consumer-facing Staff Questionnaire

Q26 Please assess ***your relationship with consumers*** on the following descriptions, by circling the appropriate number between each pair of descriptors.

compatible goals and desires	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	incompatible goals and desires
friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	hostile
unfair	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	fair
selfish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unselfish
equal power	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	unequal power
co-operative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	competitive
social-oriented	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	work-oriented
formal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	informal
clashing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	harmonious
emotional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intellectual
close	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	distant
similar roles	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	different roles
superficial	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	intense
easy to leave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	difficult to break contact
discrete transaction	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	longer term relationship
lot of trust	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	requires little trust
high risk	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	low risk/uncertainty
history of relationship important to its continuing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	history is not important

APPENDIX 7 Consumer-facing Staff Questionnaire

Your views

Q27 Please indicate the extent to which the following values are important to ***you personally***, by circling the appropriate number for each value.

	Not very important				Very important
Co-operation with all our stakeholders*	1	2	3	4	5
Diligence	1	2	3	4	5
Moral Integrity	1	2	3	4	5
Openness	1	2	3	4	5
Initiative	1	2	3	4	5
Experimentation (with changes to the brand to satisfy our *customers)*	1	2	3	4	5
Aggressiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Fairness	1	2	3	4	5
Adaptability	1	2	3	4	5
Creativity	1	2	3	4	5
Development	1	2	3	4	5
Courtesy	1	2	3	4	5
Cautiousness	1	2	3	4	5
Social Equality	1	2	3	4	5
Economy	1	2	3	4	5
Consideration	1	2	3	4	5
Formality	1	2	3	4	5
Humour	1	2	3	4	5
Forgiveness	1	2	3	4	5
Broad-mindedness	1	2	3	4	5
Logic	1	2	3	4	5
Autonomy	1	2	3	4	5
Obedience	1	2	3	4	5
Orderliness	1	2	3	4	5

* By '**stakeholders**' we mean all individuals or groups who can affect or are affected by the achievement of the firm's objectives e.g. consumers, staff, suppliers, distributors.

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Personal details

The questions in this section are for use by The Open University to assess the characteristics of people completing the questionnaire. Your personal details will not be passed to any other individuals or organisations and the data will not be used in any way that will identify you as an individual.

Q28 How long have you worked for this company? (Years and Months)

.... Years .... Months

Q29 How long have you been in your current job? (Years and Months)

.... Years .... Months

Q30 How long have you worked in this industry?(Years)

.... Years

Q31 What is your job title?

....

Q32 How long have you worked in a sales/service staff role?

....

Q33 *In which industry and job role have you spent most of your career?*

....

Q34 Please indicate which, if any, of the following qualifications you hold. (Please tick all that apply.)

GCSEs or CSE/GCE 'O' Levels.............................. ☐

'A' Levels/Highers.. ☐

City & Guilds/NVQ.. ☐

HNC/HND... ☐

Bachelor's Degree.. ☐

Master's Degree/Doctorate................................ ☐

Other qualifications (please specify)

.... ☐

.... ☐

.... ☐

Professional qualifications (please specify)

.... ☐

.... ☐

.... ☐

APPENDIX 7 Consumer-facing Staff Questionnaire

Q35 How is your performance assessed? (Please tick all that apply.)

Individually.. ☐

As a team... ☐

Both individually and as a team.......................... ☐

Other (Please specify)....................................... ☐

Q36 Which of [**insert brand name**]'s products do you work on?

....

Q37 How old are you?

.... Years

Q38 What is your name? (Your name will be used for administration purposes only. Your answers to this questionnaire will be kept anonymous.)

....

Thank you for your help in completing this questionnaire.

Please return your completed questionnaire in the pre-paid envelope provided.

Professor Leslie de Chernatony
Open University Business School
The Open University
Walton Hall
Milton Keynes
MK7 6AA

APPENDIX 8 Letter to OUBS MBA Alumni

The Open University

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Fax (01908) 655898
International No: +44 1908 655888

[**insert name and adress**]

[**insert date**]

Dear [**insert name**]

We are undertaking a study to develop a model about branding, which should:

(i) help managers better differentiate their brand from competitors, and
(ii) help them appreciate how the brand's team and sales/service staff could work better together to improve their brand's performance.

The research will involve administering questionnaires to members of the management team responsible for managing the [**insert brand name**] brand, sales/service staff and consumers. In the first instance therefore, we need to contact the most senior member of management to whom the brand team report to explain our study and gain that person's approval to conduct this research in your organisation.

As an Open University Business School MBA graduate, I am writing to you to seek your advice as to whom I should contact in your organisation. I would be most grateful if you could let me know whom I should approach.

In return for allowing us to undertake our study in your organisation we will provide you with a report detailing the findings. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence and I have a research budget to cover the cost of this research project.

The study will be undertaken by myself and Fiona Harris, who is Research Fellow in Brand Management at the Business School.

I very much hope that your organisation will participate in this study, and help us advance knowledge about more effective brand management.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Leslie de Chernatony
Professor of Brand Marketing

APPENDIX 9 Letter to brand contact identified by OUBS MBA Alumnus/alumna

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[**insert name and address**]

[**insert date**]

Dear [**insert name**]

We are undertaking a study to develop a model about branding, which should:

(i) *help managers* better differentiate their brand from competitors, and
(ii) help them appreciate how the brand's team and sales/service staff could work better together to improve their brand's performance.

The research will involve administering questionnaires to members of the management team responsible for managing the [**insert brand name**] brand, sales/service staff and consumers.

We are contacting you because [**insert name of MBA alumnus/alumna**], who we contacted as an MBA graduate of the Open University, advised us that you would be the most appropriate person to approach.

In return for allowing us to undertake our study in your organisation we will provide you with a report detailing the findings. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence and I have a research budget to cover the cost of this research project.

The study will be undertaken by myself and Fiona Harris, who is Research Fellow in Brand Management at the Business School.

I very much hope that your organisation will participate in this study, and help us advance knowledge about more effective brand management.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Leslie de Chernatony
Professor of Brand Marketing

APPENDIX 10 Letter sent to brand contact identified from direct enquiries

The Open University

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Telephone (01908) 655888
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International No: +44 1908 655888

[**insert address**]

[**insert date**]

Dear [**insert name**],

We are undertaking a study to develop a model about branding, which should:

(i) help managers better differentiate their brand from competitors, and
(ii) help them appreciate how the brand's team and sales/service staff could work better together to improve their brand's performance.

The research will involve administering questionnaires to members of the management team responsible for managing the [**insert brand name**] brand, sales/service staff and consumers.

In return for allowing us to undertake our study in your organisation, we will provide you with a report detailing the findings. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence and I have a research budget to cover the cost of this research project.

The study will be undertaken by myself and Fiona Harris, who is Research Fellow in Brand Management at the Business School.

I very much hope that your organisation will participate in this study, and help us advance knowledge about more effective brand management.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Leslie de Chernatony
Professor of Brand Marketing

APPENDIX 11 Covering letter to brand team members

The Open University

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Milton Keynes
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Dear [**insert name**]

Following our meeting with [**insert name**], we are delighted that [**insert brand name**] has agreed to participate in one of our research projects. We are doing this study to help managers better differentiate their brand and help them increase brand performance. The results of the study will be given to your senior managers to help them consider the brand implications.

As a member of the team responsible for managing the [**insert brand name**] brand, we are reliant on you completing the attached questionnaire. Your contribution is critical and we would be grateful if you could take a little time to fill in this questionnaire and return it to us using the pre-paid envelope provided.

Confidentiality is assured in terms of the identity of respondents completing questionnaires and your company's identity and participation in the study. Data will be aggregated across groups and the anonymity of individuals and organisations will be strictly preserved.

The study is being undertaken by myself and Fiona Harris, who is Research Fellow in Brand Management at the Business School.

Your help in completing and returning the enclosed questionnaire is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Leslie de Chernatony
Professor of Brand Marketing

Instructions for completing this questionnaire

This questionnaire should take you no longer than 30 minutes to complete.

The questionnaire is divided into sections that ask about the [**insert brand name**] brand, your organisation, your interactions with your colleagues, other staff and consumers, and your personal views.

Please answer **ALL** of the questions, even if you might wonder about the relevance of a question and answer those that may be less relevant to the best of your ability.

If you have any questions regarding the questionnaire, please ring Fiona Harris on 01908 654096.

Many thanks for your help.

List of data for sampling purposes

To decide how best to select the staff and consumer samples from their respective totals, it would be helpful to identify:

- The number of consumer-facing staff (by product and department/centre as appropriate) (contact sample size of 165 to achieve target sample size of 50, or all consumer-facing staff if fewer than this in total)

- The numbers of consumers for each product (contact sample size of 330 to achieve target sample size of 100)

For the consumer-facing staff (i.e. customer service and sales staff), we mean those staff who have daily contact with consumers (through whatever media). Staff such as supervisors who only have contact with consumers on rare occasions when there is a problem should be excluded from the sampling.

The consumer-facing staff sample should be selected in proportion to the size of the departments/centres from which these staff are to be drawn, where possible.

For the consumers, the sample should be selected according to the number of consumers per product, unless there is a large variation between products in the amount of contact consumers have with the brand. It is obviously important that consumers should have sufficient contact with the brand to be able to complete a questionnaire and also be consumers who have direct contact with the brand rather than through intermediaries.

It is vital that individual staff and consumers are selected randomly within these sampling frames.

APPENDIX 14 Covering letter to consumer-facing staff

The Open University

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Dear [**insert name**]

We are delighted that [**insert brand name**] has agreed to participate in one of our research projects. We are doing this study to help managers better differentiate their brand and help them increase brand performance. The results of the study will be given to your senior managers to help them consider the brand implications.

As a member of the sales/service staff responsible for representing the [**insert brand name**] brand to consumers, we are reliant on you completing the attached questionnaire. Your contribution is critical and we would be extremely grateful if you could take a little time to fill in this questionnaire and return it to us using the pre-paid envelope provided.

Confidentiality is assured in terms of the identity of respondents completing questionnaires and your company's identity and participation in the study. Data will be aggregated across groups and the anonymity of individuals and organisations will be strictly preserved.

The study is being undertaken by myself and Fiona Harris, who is Research Fellow in Brand Management at the Business School.

Your help in completing and returning the enclosed questionnaire is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Leslie de Chernatony
Professor of Brand Marketing

Instructions for completing this questionnaire

This questionnaire should take you no longer than 30 minutes to complete.

The questionnaire is divided into sections that ask about the [**insert brand name**] brand, your organisation, your interactions with your colleagues, other staff and consumers, and your personal views.

Please answer **ALL** of the questions, even if you might wonder about the relevance of a question and answer those that may be less relevant to the best of your ability.

If you have any questions regarding the questionnaire, please ring Fiona Harris on 01908 654096.

Many thanks for your help.

APPENDIX 16 Follow-up letter to consumer-facing staff

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Dear [**insert name**]

You were recently sent a questionnaire as part of our study of financial services organisations. If you have already returned the questionnaire, please accept our thanks for helping us to identify how managers can better differentiate their brand and help them increase brand performance.

However, if you have not yet returned the questionnaire or have mislaid it, we would be extremely grateful if you could please complete the enclosed replacement questionnaire and return it to us in the prepaid envelope provided as soon as possible.

As a member of staff responsible for representing the [**insert brand name**] brand to customers, your views are vital to this research. Your answers to the questionnaire will be kept strictly anonymous.

Your help in completing and returning the enclosed questionnaire is greatly appreciated.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours sincerely,

Leslie de Chernatony
Professor of Brand Marketing

APPENDIX 17 Covering letter to consumers

The Open University

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Walton Hall
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Telephone (01908) 655888
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Dear **[insert name]**

The Open University Business School is conducting a study amongst financial services organisations and their customers to identify how financial services brands can be improved to better reflect consumers' views.

Your contribution, as a **[insert brand name]** customer, is critical and we would be extremely grateful if you could take a little time to fill in the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us as soon as possible using the pre-paid envelope provided. There is no obligation for you to participate in this study, but we would be extremely grateful for your help.

In return for your help, we will make a donation to your choice of charity from the charities listed at the end of the questionnaire.

Your personal details will not be passed to any organisations and your reply will not be used in any way that will identify you as an individual.

The study is being undertaken by myself and Fiona Harris, who is Research Fellow in Brand Management at the Business School.

Your help in completing and returning the enclosed questionnaire is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Leslie de Chernatony
Professor of Brand Marketing

APPENDIX 18 Instructions for completing the consumer questionnaire

Instructions for completing this questionnaire

This questionnaire should take you about 20 minutes to complete.

The questionnaire is divided into sections that ask about your experience with and views about [**insert brand name**], your interactions with [**insert brand name**]'s sales/service staff, and your personal views.

Please answer **ALL** of the questions, even if you might wonder about the relevance of a question and answer those that may be less relevant to the best of your ability.

If you have any questions regarding the questionnaire, please ring Fiona Harris on 01908 654096.

Many thanks for your help.

APPENDIX 19 Follow-up letter to consumers

The Open University

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Telephone (01908) 655888
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Dear [**insert name**]

You were recently sent a questionnaire as part of our study of financial services organisations. If you have already returned the questionnaire, please accept our thanks for helping us to identify how financial services brands can be improved to better reflect consumers' views. However, if you have not yet returned the questionnaire or have mislaid it, we would be extremely grateful if you could please complete the enclosed replacement questionnaire and return it to us in the prepaid envelope provided as soon as possible. Please remember to tick the charity to which you would like us to make a donation from the list at the end of the questionnaire in return for your help.

As a [**insert brand name**] customer, your views are vital to this research. There is no obligation for you to participate in this study, but we would be extremely grateful for your help.

Your answers to the questionnaire will be kept strictly anonymous and your personal details will not be passed to any organisations.

Your help in completing and returning the enclosed questionnaire is greatly appreciated.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours sincerely,

Leslie de Chernatony
Professor of Brand Marketing